

Visit to Aruba marks 100 visits different Hard Rock Café's around the world

Jim Hulin 1st to join Hard Rock Café Century Club from Aruba



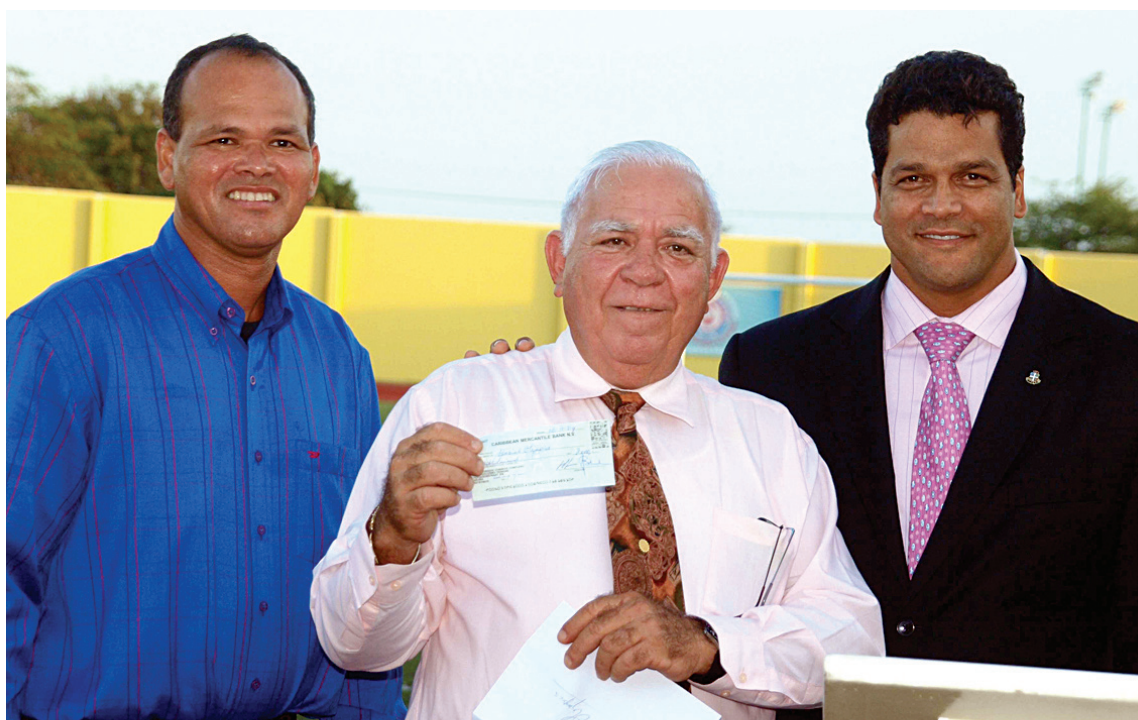
PALM BEACH – There are only a few dozen people around the world who have proudly been initiated into the Hard Rock Café's Century Club. In order to obtain membership, Hard Rock Café

fans must of have visited 100 different Hard Rock Café locations around the world. Aruba marks Jim Hulin's 100th location in just 8 years and as a second achievement, Hulin becomes the first ever

fan to reach Century Club level from Aruba.

Jim was accompanied by his wife Michelle who is currently celebrating her 99th visit while on Aruba. Together Jim and Michelle have over 6,000

Aruba's Special Olympics 2009



Ministry of sport donates to special olympics

DAKOTA- This past weekend, the Special Olympics of Aruba was conducted over three days with dozens of local athletes competing in the sport disciplines of soccer, bowling, badminton, bacci ball, table tennis and track and field. Attending the opening ceremonies at the Guillermo Trinidad Stadium in Dakota were a number of local dignitaries including Minister of Public Health and Sport, Richard Visser,

and Minister of Economic and Social Affairs and Culture, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar. Minister Hooyboer-Winkler was invited to officially open the games by releasing an array of red and green balloons.

This years Special Olympics were dedicated to the memory of three Aruban special athletes who recently passed away.

Continued on Pages 8 & 9



Hard Rock Café pins in their 16 year collection. Michelle plans to celebrate her entrance into the coveted Century Club next year in Waikiki, Hawaii and Jim will add one more for a grand total of 101 Hard Rock Café visits. Though they are both tempted to take a trip over to the Hard Rock Café in Caracas, Venezuela. Jim and Michelle Hulin are from the lovely Las Vegas and have visited every Hard Rock Café in the United States, Canada, Caribbean and most of Europe. Besides their current trip to Aruba, one of

the most favorable trips was to the unique Hard Rock Café in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The very first visit to a Hard Rock Café for Jim was to the fabulous New York location and prior to the Aruba visit, the Hulin's last visit to a Hard Rock was the new location in Dallas, Texas.

Jim and Michelle Hullin are pictured at their respective 100th and 99th visits to a Hard Rock Café location around the world together with Hard Rock Café Aruba General Manager Ramon "Pachi" Higuerey. □

~ Photos by Julia Renfro ~



At the Divi Phoenix Aruba Resort

Beautiful Beach Wedding ceremony for Erin Streeter & Nicholas Orpik



Palm Beach – A gorgeous wedding ceremony at the edge of the water married Erin & Nicholas in the presence of their parents Mr. & Mrs. Lester Streeter and Mr. & Mrs. William Orpik; also on hand to participate in the dream affair, 85 wedding guests who came here from the West and

East coast of the USA.

A poem, an Irish prayer, the exchange of vows and rings, and the blessings by officiant Dr. Robert Canter took place just before sunset, to the quiet musical accompaniment of steel drums and ocean waves.

Erin & Nicholas have known each other since childhood, and they have been together for ten years. As repeat visitors to Aruba they own timeshare condos at Divi Phoenix, and they always stay at the same lovely resort.

Marco, F&B Manager of the Divi Phoenix, reports a special band flew down from Boston, Mike Benjamin and the Grand Trio, to entertain at the party that followed. □

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At Aqua Grill restaurant in Palm Beach

Intimate wedding reception and dinner held for New York couple

PALM BEACH – Aruba is one of the most popular island locales for destination weddings. Great weather, gorgeous beaches, and world-class accommodations and dining options are irresistible for brides and grooms seeking that fairytale seaside wedding. This past Friday, lovebirds John and Laura Pizzella lived that dream with a romantic wedding ceremony on Eagle Beach at sunset. Following the nuptials, the couple, from Westchester, New York, and their guests made their way over to Palm Beach to enjoy a chic, intimate reception in



the lounge of critically-acclaimed seafood restaurant, Aqua Grill, followed by dinner from a menu that features live Maine lobster, fresh-only seafood, steaks, pasta, and the island's largest raw bar. Aqua Grill is the restaurant of choice for many brides and grooms looking for an authentic Caribbean seafood dining experience for either their rehearsal

dinner or reception. A staff experienced in event planning can assist with all the details—from flowers to cake and music-

--and can also tailor menus for events. For more information or to make reservations for dinner, call 586-5900. □

ALOHA BRIDGE CLUB ARUBA (ABCA)

RESULTS THURSDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2009

A total of 10 pairs attended the Thursday morning bridge session at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club Resort.

The following guest players joined the play: Herbert Friedman, Corrie and Jaap Poot.

The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Corrie and Jaap Poot 72.50 %
- 2 Liesbeth van den Ham / Geke In 't Veld 57.81 %
- 3 Gerry Meenhorst / Nelly Aal 56.25 %
- 4 Herbert Friedman / George Manning 53.13 %

Edith Henriquez / Sheila Lampe 53.13 %

RESULTS FRIDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2009
This evening a total of 10 pairs joined the bridge session at the Frank Conway Room of Casa del Mar.

The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Edith Henriquez/ Sheila Lampe 57.29 %
- 2 Geke In 't Veld / Kees Vader 55.73 %
- 3 Joke Henriquez / Willy Flanegin 55.43 %
- 4 Lorraine and Len Wright 52.54 %
- 5 Gerry Meenhorst / Annette Ybeles 51.41 %

Aloha Bridge Club Aruba meets twice a week: on Thursday mornings at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club, starting at 9.00 am and on Friday evenings at the Frank Conway Room of Casa del Mar starting at 7.30 pm. Signing up closes ten minutes before starting time. Fee for guest players: \$ 6.00 or Afl. 10.00 per person.

The club can also be of assistance in finding single players a bridge partner. Please call Addy Eilers : tel. 582-4953 □

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Italy is victorious at MooMba Beach

Beach Tennis can't get any more spectacular than this!



The Italians claimed victory last Sunday evening at MooMba Beach: they were invincible in the ladies as well as in the men's division. Spectacular play, unbelievable rallies and the highest level possible alternated on center court. Enthusiastic fans saw Federica Bacchetta and Veronica Visani defeat Joana Cortez and Samantha Barijan from Brazil in the final; after that Alex Mingozi and Matteo Marighella sandblasted their countrymen Massimo

Mattei and Paolo Tranci in two, unbelievable sets. The fans went crazy, DJ Jeroen got hyped real good and sparks of electricity coming from MooMba shot through the sky.

Veni, vini, vinci must have been the slogan which must have been the propelling motor behind the fantastic performance of the Italians. They came, saw and conquered taking revenge on Brazil, which grabbed the Nations Cup on Friday evening.



This year's Pro Division was truly awesome and everyone who was at MooMba Beach felt the vibes.

The other categories saw great play too, with very good results for Aruban players in the Advanced Ladies, Advanced Men, Advanced Mix, the Fun Mix and the Advanced Singles Ladies, just to name a few. Their regular practice sessions have paid off!



Results are:

Pro Ladies: Federica Bacchetta/Veronica Visani (ITA) – Joana Cortez/Samantha Barijan (Brazil) – (6-4/6-4)

Advanced Ladies: Natali Samardik/Virginia Melendez – Fabiana Silva/Paula Caetano (Bra) – (7-4)

Fun Laides: Natasja Rudolphus/Kathy Guido – Laura and Brigitte Laks – (7-3)

Pro Men: Alex Mingozi/Matteo Marighella – Massimo Mattei/Paolo Tranci – (6-2/6-2)

Advanced Men: William van Ramshorst/Fabrizio Battaglia – Patrick Boset/Edwin Hekman – (7-2)

Intermediate Men: Todd Besanceney/Ryan Ollock – Charlie Witteveen/Agim Vesalij – (7-3)

Fun Men: Fabio Lucchi/Manuel Muller – Raynold Hughes/Gregory Mathilda – (7-1)

Advanced Mix: Jose Marin/Rixt Kramer – Alan and Yvonne Baay – (7-1)

Fun Mix: Fred and Wendy Jansen – Bob Janse/Roos de Hart – (7-2)

The Aruba International Beach Tennis Tournament 2009 was a blast: a weekend filled with fun and play, music and happiness. Life can's any better than this! ☐

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Caribbean island installs Berson's InLine UV disinfection systems

Opting for UV disinfection instead of chlorine, as part of its 'non-chemical' approach to water treatment, the island of Aruba has installed ten of the Berson InLine UV disinfection systems to disinfect drinking water and treat greywater prior to discharge.

With a semi-arid climate, desalination is necessary for Aruba to obtain enough drinking water for the growing population. Five of the UV disinfection systems have been installed

in the Balashi water treatment plant, on the site of gold mill ruins near Aruba's capital, Oranjestad. Following the desalination process the water passes through the UV systems before being transported to seven storage tanks situated at elevated locations around the island of Aruba. The InLine UV units, which are installed outdoors and controlled by DGtronic microprocessors, each disinfect 400 m³ of water per hour, rising to 600

m³/h during peak flow conditions. Two of the seven storage tanks situated around the island are also fitted with Berson's InLine UV systems, providing an additional disinfection step prior to distribution.

Two Berson InLine UV disinfection systems are being used to treat greywater at the island's two wastewater treatment plants and the treated greywater is used to irrigate the island's two golf courses. The Dr. Horacio Hospital on the island also uses UV technology. Danny van Kuringen, customer service manager at Berson said: "There is a lot of interest in our UV systems on the island, especially from businesses wanting to use greywater for hosing down buildings. It is very dusty



Berson's customer service manager Danny van Kuringen with some of the Berson InLine UV disinfection systems at Aruba's Balashi water treatment plant



A Berson InLine UV disinfection system installed on one of Aruba's drinking water storage tanks

on Aruba, so keeping the outside of buildings clean is a real concern for many companies.

We have also recently supplied one of our new InLine+ UV systems to disinfect drinking water for the airport." Berson's compact InLine medium pressure UV systems use MultiWave lamps, which emit a wide spectrum of UV wavelengths with a very high energy

output which deactivates microorganisms. The small size of the lamps means that they are positioned perpendicularly to the flow of liquid, increasing disinfection efficiency and reducing the overall size of the disinfection unit. The Berson InLine UV disinfection systems are also fully validated in accordance with the USEPA UV Disinfection Guidance Manual (UVDGM). □



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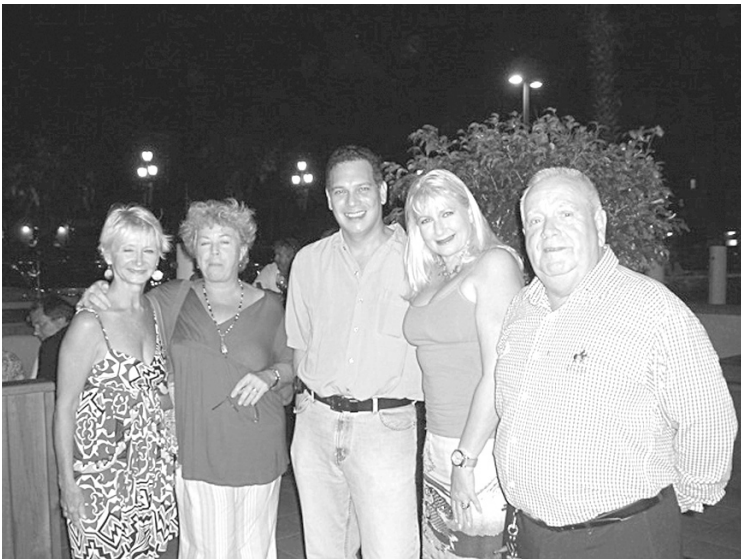
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Cilo Welcomes IFA for Happy Hour



ORANJESTAD -- Ever in search for the best places to eat, drink and be merry, the International Friends of Aruba found a real gem right in downtown Oranjestad. The newly opened Cilo, City Lounge, combines the casual ambience of an expensive beach house terrace with the glamour of an open-air

concept restaurant. This unique combination created the perfect setting for this international group. Guests sipped their favorite cocktails on the terrace, feeling a part of the "jet set" while taking in the view over the Renaissance Marina and its many yachts. The professional and courteous

Cilo staff presented numerous complimentary hors d'oeuvres, representative of the restaurant's fine cuisine. President of IFA, Marty Relan, encourages any person interested in joining the organization to check the website at www.ifaruba.com





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Experience Papillon's gripping story! Introducing a catching special for the early Birds

PALM BEACH – Henri Charrière, one of the world's most famous prisoners, would surely have had the time of his life at Papillon Restaurant in The Village, across from the Radisson Resort. Nicknamed Papillon because of the butterfly tattoo on his chest, the Frenchman was the first convict to escape from Devil's Island, something that nobody had ever done before. Charrière's thrilling, gripping...

auto-biography has been the concept behind Papillon Restaurant. The décor, the decorations and especially the restrooms wink at the thirteen terrible years Papillon spent in prison in French Guyana. Papillon restaurant's menu reflects the Frenchman's arduous journey to freedom: classic French dishes have been dusted with daring Caribbean flair and are a culinary journey for your taste buds. The spacious outside terrace is perfect for casual fine dining; the iron bars, flecks of rust and stains on the walls make one very glad not to be in Papillon's shoes in the 1940's! Charrière would undoubtedly have loved 'his' place on Aruba: this is luxury living for anyone!

Early Bird

Papillon Restaurant offers a daily Early Bird special. A delicious 3-course meal with a glass of house wine for just \$29.75 per person between 5pm and 7pm

Opening hours

Papillon's opening hours are from 5 pm until midnight. The restaurant's daily specials will be explained by the staff. For reservations, please call 586 5400 or go to www.papillonaruba.com.

Papillon Restaurant is located in The Village, just across from the Radisson Resort.

Papillon
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Lighting the torch

Continued from Front Page
Leroy Matthew was the first Aruban special athlete to win a gold medal during the International Special Olympics conducted in Connecticut in 1996. Sherwin Maria won gold in the regional games

in Jamaica and Johnny Ras was their star softball pitcher. A moment of silence was observed to commemorate the loss of these brave athletes. Aruba's Special Olympics commenced with a show honoring local culture, and

Mark Gonzales, a special athlete known for his singing talent, performed Aruba's national anthem, "Aruba Dushi Terra." During the opening ceremonies, recently confirmed Minister Visser marked his first time in



Aruba's Special Olympics 2009

participating with the opening ceremonies by presenting a donation to Arturo Werleman, Director of the Foundation for the Mentally Challenged and President of the Aruba Special Olympics Committee.

Official sponsor of Aruba's Special Olympics is Digicel, which internationally has been a strong supporter of these events. Wanda Broeksema, Director of Marketing for Digicel in the ABC islands was present as their representative.

The opening evening included the track and field events, and on Saturday Eagle Bowling Palace hosted the bowling competition. During the International Special Olympics in 2007 conducted in Shanghai, China, Aruba's special athletes garnered five gold medals in bowling.



Minister of Public Health and Sport, Sponsors Digicel, Head of volunteers and Director of SVGA



Minister of Economic and Social Affairs and Culture releases balloons and opens olympics.

The weekend of competition finished at the foundation's gymnasium and playing fields in Piedra Plat with closing ceremonies and the awarding of medals. In past years, Aruba has welcomed special athletes from Curacao, Bonaire

and St. Martaan to compete in the their annual games, but this year Mr. Werleman stated they kept the local event "low profile" as they are preparing for important international events coming up in the next few months.



Mark Gonzales sings the national anthem



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First child-appropriate gym will open in St. Maarten in December

~ Aims to put dent in child obesity ~

COLE BAY--Princess Port de Plaisance is hoping to put a dent in child obesity in St. Maarten/St. Martin with the opening of the first full-service child-appropriate gym on island.

News of the children's gym comes in the midst of mounting concerns about obesity among youths in the Netherlands Antilles and the need for children to be more physically active and health conscious. The gym will be equipped with a line of resistance equipment recently designed specifically for children ages five to 18, such as child-appropriate treadmills, weight machines, bikes and kick boxing equipment.

Plans for the gym were born sometime back when Katsiaryna Ozkan, a mother of four young children and wife of Princess Group of Companies President Sudi Ozkan, saw the need for such a facility for children.

Work on the facility began several months ago and is

expected to be completed in time for a tentative December opening. The 70-square metre gym will be located in the renovated spa and fitness club at Port de Plaisance which will be rebranded Princess Country Club when re-opened. The Country Club will contain a full-service spa and fitness centre: an adult's gym, a spa, a full service salon, three studios (each with capacity to accommodate some 30 persons at a time) and the lap pool; it aims to fulfil just about any request for its clients.

Ozkan said, as a mother of young school-aged children, she had always been concerned about children's health and fitness and had wanted to design a facility where young children could work out and maintain healthy bodies on equipment tailored to their specific needs.

She shares the view expressed in some circles that the issue of child obesity is not only about what kids eat, but also about how physically active

they are.

Katsiaryna said while "food should be our medicine," physical activities are just as important to creating and maintaining a healthy lifestyle and bodies that can ward off future diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. She said too that the intention was for entire families to come out to the Country Club and work out together, as there would be facilities specifically for children as well as for their parents.

Personal kids' fitness instructors will be on hand to supervise children using the kids' gym. The manager of the facility Shakila Snijders is also a trained child psychologist. Katsiaryna said all the equipment ordered was child safe, so parents wouldn't have to worry about their children

being hurt while exercising. The entire gym was also being constructed child-safe to minimise possible injuries to children.

"We want to bring families here to be fit together," said Katsiaryna. "If the father or mother is engaged in a sport, the children can work out in a gym that suits their level. We realised that there is a need for kids to continue being active and we wanted to ensure that there are facilities available for them to lead healthier lifestyles," she said.

The line of gym equipment is from the SHOKK® brand – a company which reportedly specialises in professional fitness for the youth sector. The equipment is designed based on up-to-date international anthropometric measurements; has counterbalanced

mechanisms providing the appropriate starting weight; features numerically engraved gas lift guided seats and contains elevated extra non-slip platforms for support and safety, and oversized ergonomic rotational thermoplastic grips give extra comfort.

Given the relevance of the issue of obesity in St. Maarten, Katsiaryna said special discounts would be offered to early birds who signed up for use of the facility.

The Parliamentary Committee on Obesity reported last week that they were concerned about child obesity and found obesity among youngsters to be very high, and they underscored the need for a preventative approach, which owners of the new gym are hoping that their facility will provide. □

SHTA latest to write Exco on Mullet Bay urging action

PHILIPSBURG--St. Maarten Hospitality and Trade Association (SHTA) is the latest group to write the Executive Council urging action at Mullet Bay and deploring the condition of Rhine Road. SHTA's letter to the council is in support of the concerned businesses and residents of Cupecoy.

"The SHTA believes that, based on the feedback from visitors and the string of robberies that occur in that abandoned area, the request to clean up the district is fair," SHTA's letter read in part.

"We understand that circumstances have prevented Government from getting involved in the past. However, we feel that it is high time that all efforts be made to prevent harm against our valued residents and visitors," it read.

The SHTA board outlined that Mullet Bay was also identified in the Tourism Master Plan, where it was suggested to develop it into a country club to ensure sustainable tourism

development.

"The SHTA agrees that this action could enhance St. Maarten's tourism product and attract the genre of tourist that we lost 14 years ago.

However, given the current global developments, this may not be the appropriate time for such an investment," the letter read.

SHTA said it hoped the Executive Council would realise the danger that the adverse conditions of Mullet Bay and Rhine Road posed, and would take the necessary steps to improve the condition of the area.

SHTA's letter comes on the heels of the petition started about two weeks ago, which should be presented to Lt. Governor Franklyn Richards some time this week. CEO of the Maho Group Saro Spadaro, developers of Blue Mall and private citizens have all issued statements or written the Executive Council about Mullet Bay. □



Darren James tells NA congress: Keep pace with evolving world

~ Market the island to bring its youngsters home ~

PHILIPSBURG--Leadership should be able to keep the country in pace with the evolving world, was the prominent message in Darren James' keynote address at the first congress of the governing National Alliance (NA) political party on Sunday.

James, son of the late NA leader Vance James, Jr., was selected by NA to address party members and supporters at the congress titled "Together, moving forward."

"As time passes and the world around us evolves physically, technologically, socially, and otherwise ... one thing must be realised – the leadership should be able to keep the country in pace with these evolutions and have the vision to foresee and realise where we must evolve, not only to keep pace, but to be a frontrunner in our industry and a leader in our region," James said.

He said it was evident that St. Maarten Patriotic Movement, later St. Maarten Patriotic Alliance and still later National Alliance possessed the qualities to lead the people of St. Maarten.

James told the party that if St. Maarten was to move forward with country status, "then we have to start thinking like a country and regarding ourselves as a country," adding, "As time moves on, knowledge is shared, experiences are documented and the torch that burns so brightly must be passed on in order to keep its flame."

In this regard, he told the party St. Maarten's youngsters, whether on or off the island,

were some of the sharpest, well-trained minds in the country's history and there was a need to get them back to the country to fully utilise their abilities.

He noted that St. Maarten, a well-loved tourist destination, had learned very well how to market itself to attract international visitors who often made the island their home. The island should market itself to bring back home its own youngsters, he said.

"If we can market to so many tourists to purchase and develop real estate across this magnificent landscape, then why not [market] to our own?" James asked.

Another strong initiative that needed to be encouraged, he advised, was the formation of small businesses "owned by our very own."

"Every economy in the world has its major power players, but the bulk of the employment comes from small businesses that employ so many and provide financial wealth and emotional strength for so many," he noted.

"It's not only about the money, however, ladies and gentlemen. It is about the encouragement, the knowledge and the know-how that will ensure the success of so many," James added.

He told the party that in moving forward, it should not undervalue the advice young people provided. "Never undermine an initiative that they have started; refrain from the arrogance of 'I know more so I know right.' Remember that experience is your best teacher."

He noted the challenge of educating masses of people in a short time frame. "It is a most difficult task to change the minds of those who support others and assist those with no opinion or preference to formulate one during a brief campaign, when you most have their attention.

"It is a daunting task to fix what others have left broken and then to get the wheels working right. In my short 20 years of life and my own 'political' experiences in my campaigns for office, I have found those experiences to be true," he said.

James told the party that while he often had seen how its leadership was appreciated, standing at the threshold of the history of country St. Maarten he recognised the immense workload, the pressure and the scrutiny under which it came.

"St. Maarten needs you now so much to take us out of the promise of Country St. Maarten and into the reality that is Country St. Maarten," he encouraged.

He urged the party, while continuing to cast light on the 16 square miles of Dutch St. Maarten, not to neglect or minimise the potential of one of its greatest partners, French St. Martin.

"Remember: many cultures, one island, one people. I know the task of handling what you have on your plate now and focusing on passing on such great information to the future is a difficult task, but it is not an impossible one. We are moving now – continue to move us," James encouraged.

None too soon

As some may have noticed, yachting activity on the Dutch side appears to be considerable less than a year ago, with the high season around the corner. While this may have something to do with the world economy, the opposite seems to be the case on the French side of Simpson Bay Lagoon and in Marigot.

The decline did not come unexpectedly and was predicted by the local yachting community as a direct result of the drastic and unannounced increase of bridge and mooring fees by Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority Corporation (SLAC) at the beginning of last year. Despite repeated warnings by, among others, the local marinas and the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association (SMTA) that these fees were making the Dutch side less competitive compared to other yacht havens such as Antigua, Tortola, St. Barths and the French side, the SLAC fees were maintained based on the financing scheme for the extended and renovated bridge.

The latter work was done precisely to accommodate bigger yachts and the growing local marine service industry, but the effect of the fees introduced to finance it all appears to have had the opposite effect. The local government when called on for a solution has repeatedly pointed to the way SLAC was set up: with a corporate structure that makes intervention difficult at best.

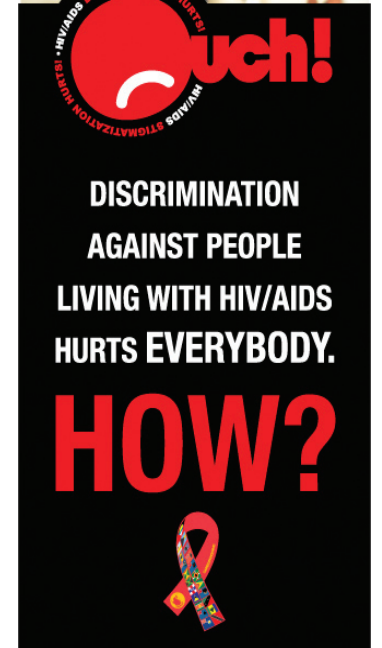
The plan is now (see last week Tuesday's paper) for St. Maarten Harbour Group of Companies to take over SLAC and so bring Simpson Bay Lagoon back under the umbrella of the local port authority. The idea is obviously that this would

enable a breakthrough in the current impasse, which continues at the expense of the marine sector and businesses that depend on it, as well as their employees.

That a consultant was hired who was very much involved in the development of local marinas and the yachting industry on the island in general in any case inspires confidence that the problem will be dealt with seriously. The big question now is how long the announced takeover, study and implementation of its recommendations will take, because there is not much time to lose.

With both stay-over and cruise tourism doing relatively well, the yachting sector cannot be allowed to fall behind any more because of a continued refusal to reverse what was an obvious estimation error. Whether it's by refinancing the bridge loan or whatever other means, the Dutch side of Simpson Bay Lagoon must be made competitive again if all the headway made through investments and efforts to develop this sector over the years is not to go down the drain.

All in all, the move to finally do something about SLAC and its fees comes none too soon. □



Curaçao opposition wants rid of US base

The leader of a leftwing opposition party on the Dutch island of Curaçao has said the island should shut down its US military base.

The contract with the United States ends next year, and Helmin Wiels, leader of the Pueblo Soberano party, says it should not be renewed. He says he wants to prevent Curaçao from being dragged

into what he predicts will be a future war between the US and Venezuela.

The US has a number of military bases in Colombia, and Mr Wiels claims the country is intent on a confrontation with Venezuela's leftwing President Hugo Chavez. He is concerned that if Curaçao continues to host the US base, Caracas will view the island as enemy territory.

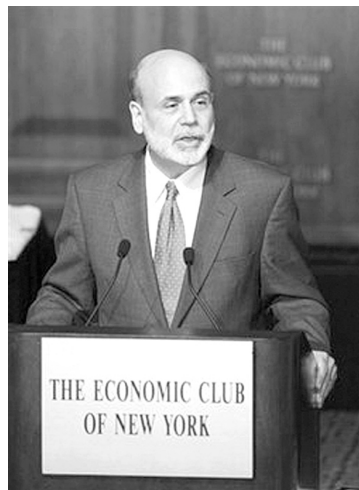
"We're a small country," he says, "and it's better for us to keep everyone as a friend."

Curaçao, in the Netherlands Antilles, lies just 70 kilometres of the Venezuelan coast. The US uses its military base, which opened in 2000, to fly missions to combat drug production in South America. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Bernanke: Fed will keep eye on sliding dollar



Ben Bernanke, chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank, speaks at a meeting of The Economic Club of New York, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009. Bernanke said the central bank will keep a close eye on the sliding U.S. dollar even as he pledged anew to keep interest rates at record-lows to nurture the economic recovery.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

By JEANNINE AVERSA,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke on Monday said the central bank will keep a close eye on the sliding U.S. dollar even as he pledged anew to keep interest rates at record-lows to nurture the economic recovery.

In remarks to the Economic Club of New York, Bernanke engaged in a delicate dance. He made clear Fed policymakers will keep rates at super-low levels. Yet through his words, Bernanke is also trying to bolster confidence in the dollar without actually raising rates, a move that could short-circuit the fragile recovery.

Economists say a free-fall in the value of the dollar is remote but can't be entirely dismissed.

Although low interest rates can put additional downward pressure on the dollar, they are needed to encourage American consumers and businesses to spend more and fuel the

economic turnaround.

"We are attentive to the implications of changes in the value of the dollar," Bernanke said in rare remarks about the greenback. The Fed, he said, will continue to "monitor these developments closely."

Although commodity prices — such as oil — have risen lately, that pickup likely reflects a revival in global economic activity and the recent depreciation of the dollar, Bernanke said. Even so, the Fed chief predicted inflation probably will remain "subdued for some time."

That gives the Fed leeway to hold rates at record-low levels for an "extended period," he said, repeating a pledge made at the Fed's meeting earlier this month.

Economists expect the Fed will hold rates near zero at its next meeting on Dec. 15-16 and into part of next year to help the recovery gain traction.

Bernanke predicted the economy should continue to grow next year, but he warned of "important headwinds" that will restrain the recovery, including a weak job market and tight credit for small businesses and households.

Those forces "likely will prevent the expansion from being as robust as we would hope," he said.

After a record four straight losing quarters, the economy started to grow again in the July-September period at a pace of 3.5 percent. Government-supported spending on homes and cars drove the rebound, raising questions about the staying power of the recovery once that assistance fades.

Bernanke said the rebound reflected more than "purely temporary factors" and predicted growth would continue into next year. □

Stocks jump as retail sales rebound in October

By STEPHEN BERNARD
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Investors kept the stock market's upward momentum going Monday, sending shares sharply higher after retail sales rebounded more than expected in October and the dollar extended its slide.

Major stock indexes rose more than 1 percent to new 13-month highs, including the Dow Jones industrial average, which jumped 145 points. The Standard & Poor's 500 index topped 1,110, the first convincing move above 1,100 after hovering around that level for the past month.

The Commerce Department said retail sales rose 1.4 percent in October, easily surpassing the 0.8 percent increase forecast by economists polled by Thomson Reuters. It was a sharp rebound following the 2.3 percent drop in September. Excluding the gain from autos, however, sales rose just 0.2 percent, half of what economists predicted.

Jamie Cox, a managing partner at Harris Financial Group, said the sales growth was a good sign heading into the holiday shopping season, especially because the data were not affected by factors such as sales tax holidays and government stimulus programs that had been present in the preceding months.

The weaker dollar lifted gold to a new record and pumped up prices of other commodities, including oil. That, in turn, helped shares of energy and materials companies.

Stocks briefly pared their gains after Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said policymakers would monitor the dollar while at the same time repeating that the Fed will hold interest rates low until the economy strengthens. That gave a short-lived boost to the dollar.

The market's own dynamics



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange September 16, 2009.

fed some of the day's gains, analysts said.

Dan Deming, a trader with Stutland Equities, said the S&P 500's move above 1,100 gave some investors a shot of confidence and led to short-covering, which tends to amplify gains in the market. Short-covering occurs when investors have to buy stock after having earlier sold borrowed shares in a bet they would fall.

"We're breaking through the 1,100 mark, which is psychologically significant, and the market is seeing a little pop from that," Deming said. In early afternoon trading, the Dow rose 147.00, or 1.4 percent, to 10,417.47. The broader S&P 500 index rose 17.03, or 1.6 percent, to 1,110.51. It traded above 1,100 in mid-October but hasn't closed above that benchmark since October last year.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 30.47, or 1.4 percent, to 2,198.35.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies advanced 14.93, or 2.6 percent, to 601.21.

The dollar fell against most other major currencies, while gold prices rose to another record. Gold rose after reaching a record of \$1,133.50 an ounce.

Bond prices rose, pushing

REUTERS/Brendan McDermid
down yields. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note fell to 3.37 percent from 3.42 percent late Friday.

General Motors Co. said it lost \$1.2 billion in the period since emerging from bankruptcy and the end of the third quarter on Sept. 30. Despite the loss, GM said it will begin to repay \$6.7 billion in government loans and was seeing a stabilization in its business.

Home improvement retailer Lowe's Cos. reported lower profits that matched analysts' expectations and said it was seeing stabilization in some of the hardest hit housing markets. The company's shares fell 19 cents to \$21.66. Investors will get more insight into consumer spending from retailers Home Depot Inc., Target Corp. and TJX Cos., which are due to report earnings Tuesday.

Cox said the wide range of retailers reporting earnings during the week will provide signals into whether shoppers are willing to step up their spending and move back toward more expensive goods. Investors will be parsing any updated forecasts from the companies ahead of the holiday shopping season.

The stock market is coming off a strong week, which added more than 2 percent to major indexes. □

Wicker Man, Equalizer actor Edward Woodward dies



FILE - In this Tuesday Feb. 13, 2007 file photo British actor Edward Woodward arrives for the world premiere of his latest film , Hot Fuzz, in London's Leicester Square. Woodward, famous for his roles in The Wicker Man and The Equalizer, died Monday, Nov. 16, 2009, aged 79, his agent said.

(AP Photo/Max Nash)

By Mike Collett-White

LONDON (Reuters) – British actor Edward Woodward, best known for roles in 1973 cult classic “The Wicker Man” and U.S. television series “The Equalizer,” died Monday aged 79.

His agent Janet Glass said the veteran of stage and screen had been ill for several months and passed away in hospital surrounded by members of his family.

“I knew him a very long time and he was a superb human being,” Glass told Reuters.

“That integrity shone through in the roles he played.

I can’t ever remember, in all the productions he undertook, anyone having a bad word to say about him and he never had anything bad to say about anyone else either.”

Woodward played police sergeant Neil Howie in occult thriller The Wicker Man, a story of his search for

a missing girl on an isolated island.

The movie, famous for its final scene in which Howie is burned alive, also starred Christopher Lee and Britt Ekland.

That part came in the wake of his appearances in the British spy series “Callan,” Woodward’s big breakthrough into television and movie acting.

In the series, which ran from the late 1960s to the early 1970s, Woodward played a rebellious British secret agent in a role that echoed his most successful U.S. venture, playing Robert McCall in the hit 1980s show The Equalizer.

The show won him a Golden Globe in 1987 for best performance by an actor in a television drama series, although according to the BBC, the actor regretted making The Equalizer because of the toll it took on his health including a major heart attack.

Woodward also earned acclaim for the 1980 Australian film “Breaker Morant,” about the murder trial of a lieutenant serving in the Second Boer War.

As well as on-screen success, Woodward was a proven singer and stage actor, and was singled out by Laurence Olivier to appear in the title role of a National Theater production of “Cyrano.”

According to Glass, Noel Coward also chose the actor to star in the Broadway show “High Spirits,” the musical version of “Blithe Spirit,” and Woodward recorded 12 solo albums.

The actor’s final on-screen appearance was earlier this year in the popular British soap opera “EastEnders.”

Woodward is survived by his wife, the English actress Michele Dotrice, and four children -- one by Doltrice and three from a previous marriage. □

Jackson’s sister blames doctor for Michael’s death

NEW YORK – Janet Jackson blames Dr. Conrad Murray for her brother Michael’s death.

She told ABC News in an interview to air Wednesday that Murray should no longer be allowed to practice medicine. “He was the one that was administering,” Jackson said. “I think he is responsible.”

Prosecutors in Los Angeles are weighing charges against Murray in the pop singer’s death. Murray told police he administered a powerful anesthetic to the singer shortly before Jackson died June 25.

A spokeswoman for the doctor, Miranda Sevcik, said Monday he continues to

maintain he neither prescribed or administered anything to Jackson that should have killed him.

Jackson told ABC’s Robin Roberts that she was at her home in New York on June 25 when her assistant called to say Michael had been taken to the hospital. She told relatives

Trial for police chief in Parker-Broderick case



ST. CLAIRSVILLE, Ohio – A prosecutor says the woman who carried twins for Hollywood couple Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick is expected to testify at the trial of an Ohio police chief accused of stealing from her home.

Barry Carpenter is suspended as chief in Martins Ferry, the Ohio town where surrogate Michelle Ross lived. Carpenter and Police Chief Chad Dojack from nearby Bridgeport are accused of scheming to sell items from the woman’s home to celebrity photographers, WTRF-TV reports. Special Prosecutor T. Shawn Hervey says two photographers are also slated to testify.

Jury selection began Monday in Carpenter’s trial on multiple felonies, including burglary. Dojack’s trial is set for January. Both men have pleaded not guilty.

Carpenter could face 21 1/2 years in prison if convicted on all charges.

FILE - In this Sept. 1, 2009 file photo actress Sarah Jessica Parker films a scene on location for ‘Sex and the City 2’ in New York.

(AP Photo/Charles Sykes)



FILE - In this July 7, 2009 file photo, Janet Jackson comforts her niece Paris Jackson as LaToya Jackson, left, looks on at the memorial service for Michael Jackson at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. Janet Jackson blames Dr. Conrad Murray for her brother Michael’s death. She told ABC News in an interview that Murray should no longer be allowed to practice medicine. Murray faces manslaughter charges for the pop star’s death this summer.

(AP Photo/Gabriel Bouys, Pool, File)

to call her when they got to the hospital and grew concerned when she wasn’t getting any calls back.

She says that a day doesn’t go

by when she doesn’t think of Michael. “It just didn’t ring true to me. It felt like a dream,” she said. “It’s still so difficult for me to believe. □

The Sunset Grille is Aruba's premier traditional steakhouse!



Palm Beach – The Sunset Grille at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa needs no introduction. The award winning American steakhouse with its chic, cosmopolitan atmosphere headlines Prime Beef, the highest grade USDA -- only 2% of all beef is graded prime, required to age a minimum of 4 weeks.

The restaurant also features Certified Angus Beef, specialty selected highly marbled USDA and premium never-frozen seafood.

While steaks and chops make

up the heart of the menu, the resort's Executive Chef Hector Espinoza and restaurant Chef Johnny Farro innovated unparalleled appetizers and extraordinary desserts, which helped the Sunset Grille achieve AAA's elite four-diamond status – a rare feat for steakhouses.

Chef Farro is now the dedicated restaurant chef, delivering over 20 years of restaurant experience to the already legendary culinary team

When asked to suggest a

perfect dinner combination, Chef Farro does not hesitate and order the Chop House Martini Salad, with Romaine Lettuce, Hearts of Palm, Sliced Egg, Tomatoes, Blue Cheese, Bacon, Sweet Pepper and creamy Chopin Vodka dressing, served "Shaken not Stirred;" the Lobster Bisque baked with a Crispy Pastry Crust and flavored with a touch of cognac, and the popular Rack of Lamb featuring Four Double Cut Chops, with Mint Pesto, Roasted Tomatoes and Onion Confit.



The latest restaurant's menu revision included the introduction of some interesting dishes such as Tuna Tataki, Sesame Rice Cracker crusted Tuna served rare with Thai Chili and Ginger; Roasted Loin Veal Chop, Apple Chutney, Maple Balsamic Glaze with a Garlic & Spinach Custard and Asia Style Salmon & Scallops, escorted by wakame salad and served over soba noodles.

The Sunset Grille always endeavors to exceed guests' expectations by purchasing the very best products available and

preparing them in accordance with a combination of "tried and true" as well as cutting edge contemporary methods, Espinoza explains.

Simply put, the Sunset Grille culinary team buys the best products, and cooks them the best way they know, refusing to cut corners, especially when it comes to buying, aging and cutting meat. No wonder the readers of Caribbean Travel & Life named it the top restaurant in the Caribbean.

Open for dinner from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. every night, indoor and outdoor seating. □

Life's a Beach at the Juggling Fish

Palm Beach -- The Juggling Fish at Playa Linda Beach Resort is designed to stimulate your shopping instincts, as the beautiful store is hard to resist. What you'll find on the oceanfront boardwalk is absolutely gorgeous: hand picked gifts, souvenirs, beach

and resort wear, it's all on display a few steps from the water.

The tastefully arranged store is signature Boston-born Jodi Tobman, also the owner of the brand-new Lazy Lizard, in the South Beach Centre. You will find a great selection of

kid gifts here. In fact an entire inner section is dedicated to gifts with a tropical appeal for babies and toddlers, among them whimsical plush stuffed iguanas, parrots and seahorses. Moreover, a bonanza of fridge magnets, hand-made silver jewelry, batik beach



wraps, throws and hats also awaits you.

Gift hunters will be pleased with the array of scented candles and candleholders. The store offers convenient barefoot browsing possibilities and is located within a short walking distance from the Hyatt Regency and the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort. The Juggling Fish at Playa Linda fits nicely into that resort's "Life's a Beach" philosophy. Open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and on Sunday, when the rest of the island is at a standstill, the helpful staff at the Juggling Fish Playa

Linda beach Resort is eager to serve you with a smile from 9 a.m. till 6 p.m. Tel.: +297 586 4999. Email: orders@salamanderholdings.com □



Tribute to Place des Tertre on the 3rd Thursday of November

Casa Tua to uncork the 1st bottle of Beaujolais Nouveau!



ORANJESTAD - Montmartre in Paris is famous for its charming square filled with artists, painters, street performers and other eccentric people.

At Casa Tua Barcelona we are going to recreate this typical French ambiance where artists meet and mingle with the 'bon vivants' of the world and at the same time we will uncork the 'primeur' of Beaujolais Nouveau! Tradition in France; Every year on the third Thursday of November a bottle of Beaujolais is opened. It is the best known harvest fest in



France and we would love to bring this party to you!

A virgin canvas will be waiting for the 'inner artist' in you to come out! Brush your artistic genes away together with your fellow guests of our 'Beaujolais Nouveau Event'. Your 'inner artist' may prefer to come out while singing along with Angela Croes, our 'gypsy style performer'

on that same evening! Or have yourself painted by our caricature art painter who will change your appearance into something surprising!

We guarantee you a fun evening with entertainment, fun and good food! You may choose one of our selected typical European Cuisine menu items which will be on our new released Casa Tua Barcelona menu. Join and enjoy this evening at Casa Tua Barcelona... you won't regret it!!

For information or reservations please call 588 5695



Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "From the pier to your plate!"

ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood in Oranjestad.

Driftwood owner Herby Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words



"fresh seafood" really mean. What Herby catches will be served in his restaurant on

the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35 ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50 ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on a daily basis from 8am to

Catch your own dinner

12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm. A charter includes: captain, mate, all fishing equipment, bait, sodas and bottled water. On a full day charter sandwiches and snacks are also included. You can call Herby directly at (297) 592 4040 or go to www.driftwoodaruba.com.

Rates:

\$380 - 1/2 day
\$760- full day
Rates per boat
Max. 6 people



Winners of Intl. LUHRS Marina Group Blue Marlin Release Tournament 2009

Driftwood Restaurant

This authentic Aruban seafood restaurant is located in characteristic downtown Oranjestad. Their extended

menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 3-course menu for just \$24.

Driftwood Restaurant

Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant

Klipstraat 12, Downtown Oranjestad

Tel: (297) 583 2515

www.driftwoodaruba.com

Opening hours: every day, but Tuesdays from 5pm till 10:30pm.



Space shuttle Atlantis lifts off on supply mission

MARCIA DUNN

Associated Press Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP) — With 100 Internet-savvy NASA fans cheering on the shuttle and churning out constant Twitter updates, Atlantis sailed smoothly into orbit Monday with six astronauts and a full load of spare parts for the International Space Station.

The supply run should keep the space station humming for years to come, and the shuttle astronauts in space for 11 days.

Atlantis was clearly visible as it shot through thin afternoon clouds, to the delight of Twittering space enthusiasts who won front-row seats to the launch. The contest winners splashed news — mostly tweeting “wow” and “amazing” about the liftoff — over countless cell phones and computers in 140 characters or less. “What’s exciting to me is that they’ve captured the spirit and the excitement that we all feel, and they were able to capture it in a very few number of characters,” NASA space operations chief Bill Gerstenmaier said with a chuckle. “They’re amazing, little, short statements about what they felt.”

Atlantis will reach the space station Wednesday. As the shuttle blasted off, the station was soaring 220 miles above the South Pacific. Launch director Mike Leinbach wished the astronauts good luck.

“We’re excited to take this incredible vehicle for a ride and meet up with another



Space shuttle Atlantis lifts off from pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Monday, Nov. 16, 2009.

Associated Press

incredible vehicle,” Hobaugh replied.

NASA wants to stockpile as many pumps, tanks, gyroscopes and other oversize equipment as possible at the space station, before the three remaining shuttles retire next fall. None of the other visiting spacecraft is big enough to carry so many large pieces.

The space agency expects to keep the space station flying until 2015, possibly 2020 if President Barack Obama gives the go-ahead.

During their 11-day flight, Hobaugh and his crew — including the first orthopedic surgeon in space, Dr. Robert Satcher Jr. — will unload the nearly 30,000 pounds (13,600

kilograms) of equipment and experiments. Most of the gear will be attached to the outside of the space station on storage platforms.

Three spacewalks will be conducted beginning Thursday to hook everything up and get a jump on the next shuttle flight.

The launch seemed to go perfectly. Only three small pieces of foam insulation were spotted coming off the fuel tank, and it was not a concern, said Bill Gerstenmaier, head of NASA’s space operations.

“What a great way to start this mission,” Gerstenmaier told reporters. He cautioned the flight ahead was tough and “we need to stay focused.” □

AP Poll: Fine print in health care prompts worries

RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR

TREVOR TOMPSON

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans are worried about the fine print in the health care overhaul, an Associated Press poll says, and those concerns are creating new challenges for President Barack Obama as he tries to overcome doubts in Congress.

Despite a widely shared conviction that major health care changes are needed, Democratic bills that aim to extend coverage to the uninsured and hold down medical costs get no better than a lukewarm reception in the latest results.

The poll found that 43 percent of Americans oppose the health care plans being discussed in Congress, while 41 percent are in support. An additional 15 percent remain neutral or undecided.

There has been little change in that broad public sentiment about the overhaul plan from a 40-40 split in an AP poll last month, but not everyone’s opinion is at the same intensity.

Continued on Page B3



U.S. President Barack Obama speaks during his town hall meeting at Shanghai Science and Technology Museum in Shanghai, China, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009.

Associated Press

World urgently watching US-China talks, Obama says

JENNIFER LOVEN

AP White House Correspondent

BEIJING (AP) — President Barack Obama declared Monday the world is urgently watching for a “meeting of the minds” between the U.S. and China as he meets with President Hu Jintao on the globe’s biggest issues — climate change, economic recession, nuclear proliferation and more.

Obama also prodded China about Internet controls and free speech, but his message was not widely heard in the country because his words were drastically limited online and shown on just one regional television channel.

Continued on Page B6

Price of a barrel of petroleum

US\$ 78.90

↓2.55

Security threat inside and out for terror trial

DEVLIN BARRETT
LARRY NEUMEISTER
Associated Press Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Hot sauce and a comb were all an al-Qaida suspect in New York needed to almost kill a guard nine years ago. The bloody episode suggests that security worries in bringing Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other suspects from the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to trial in New York City could be just as big inside the courthouse as outside.

Already, U.S. marshals are promising the highest security possible, an acknowledgment of how dangerous terror suspects have been in the past.

Attorney General Eric Holder announced Friday that Mohammed, professed mastermind of the 2001 attacks, and four accused henchmen would be brought from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to New York to face a civilian federal trial. The prosecution is planned for a court complex just blocks from where the World Trade Center towers were destroyed in the attack blamed on these men. The courthouse is among the most secure in the nation, ringed by closed-off streets, 24-hour guard posts, anti-truck-bomb barricades and street video cameras so powerful that they can read the print off a passerby's



The old federal courthouse, right, at 40 Centre Street in New York is seen on Monday, Nov. 16, 2009. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the professed mastermind of 9/11, and four of his alleged henchmen are headed for a federal civilian trial in New York; five others, including a top suspect in the bombing of the USS Cole, will be tried by a military commission

newspaper.

The Sept. 11 case would be the most spectacular of a half-dozen major terror trials in New York that already have sent away the men blamed for the less devastating 1993 bombing of the trade center, a plot to blow up five landmarks in New York City, a scheme to blow up a dozen U.S. airliners over the Far East and the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa.

Holder's decision to try the Sept. 11 suspects sparked debate over security risks posed to densely populated lower Manhattan, but far less has been said about attempted violence by the defendants themselves.

At the same federal lockup where Mohammed and the others are to be held, federal prison guard Louis Pepe was attacked in late 2000 by Mamdouh Mahmud Salim, a former top aide to al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden who was awaiting trial in the embassies case. Salim surprised Pepe by using a squeezable plastic honey bear container filled with hot sauce as a kind of

homemade pepper spray that temporarily blinded the guard.

The inmate then took a plastic comb ground into the shape of a dagger and plunged it into Pepe's left eye. The point pierced deep into his brain, causing severe permanent injury to his sight, speech and movement.

After the attack, prosecutors say papers found in the cell showed Salim's plan had been to take hostages inside the prison and free his co-defendants. While such a "breakout" plot may sound far-fetched given the security of the federal buildings, in Salim's case the very attempt nearly killed someone.

Salim's lawyer in that case, Richard Lind, said he had "mixed feelings" about Holder's decision, because while he believes the suspects should be tried in civilian court, he worries about security.

"The prison is not very secure," Lind said. "Maybe things have improved since then, but I think it would be very difficult to manage." Bureau of Prison spokesman

Associated Press

Edmond Ross said: "We ensure that the facility is secure and is run in a secure fashion, but I'm not aware that any particular heightened security procedures are going to be implemented."

It is likely, though, that the attorney general will approve extra security called "special administrative measures," which are reserved for the most dangerous prisoners. SAMs, as they are called, prohibit a defendant from communicating with other prisoners, the media or anyone not connected to their legal defense.

When Mohammed and the others are taken from their cells to the courtroom, U.S. marshals will provide security.

There, too, the last major al-Qaida trial serves as a warning.

During a pretrial hearing, al-Qaida suspect Wadhi El-Hage leaped from a jury box that held several defendants and raced toward the judge, who maneuvered his tall black chair in front of him as a shield. The defendant was tackled by a deputy U.S. marshal and slammed

against a wall next to an American flag, about a dozen feet from the judge.

The trial was held in a large ceremonial courtroom with its own security check, a sort of perimeter within the perimeter. Outside the building, heavily armed marshals stood guard. When hijacked airplanes slammed into the World Trade Center towers on Sept. 11, 2001, the same marshals rushed to the scene to join rescue efforts.

Jeff Carter, a spokesman for the marshals, said the agency will provide the maximum possible security. Both the marshals and Bureau of Prisons have "extensive experience managing the security of dangerous defendants and alleged terrorists in the U.S. judicial system," he said.

Even with extra security, some are convinced that trial in a civilian court is a bad idea. The most high-profile critic so far has been former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani, who said during the weekend the decision displayed "a lack of concern for the rights of the public." New York Gov. David Paterson said Monday that holding the trial in the city "is not a decision that I would have made."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg tried to calm any fears.

"This is nothing new; we've done this a lot," said Bloomberg. "Every time there's a high-profile case, we provide enhanced security. A lot of it you don't see, but it's there."

Josh Dratel, a lawyer who represented El-Hage, said it was right to bring Mohammed and others to trial in New York, both for legal reasons and because, he said, "there's nothing that makes New York more of a target" than it already is. □





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APPOLL

Continued from Page B1

Opponents have stronger feelings on the issue than do supporters. Seniors remain more skeptical than younger generations.

The latest survey was conducted by Stanford University with the nonprofit Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The United States is the only developed nation that does not have a comprehensive national health care plan for all its citizens, leaving about 50 million of America's roughly 300 million people uninsured. Obama, who took office in January, campaigned on a promise of offering affordable health care to all Americans.

When the AP poll questions were framed broadly, the answers seemed to indicate ample support for Obama's goals. When required trade-offs were brought into the equation, opinions shifted — sometimes dramatically. In one particularly striking finding, the poll indicated that public support for banning insurance practices that discriminate against those in poor health may not be as solid as it seems.

A ban on denial of coverage because of pre-existing medical problems has long been one of the most popular consumer protections in the health care debate. Some 82 percent said they favored the ban, according to a Pew Research Center poll in October.

In the AP poll, when told that such a ban would probably cause most people to pay more for their health insurance, 43 percent said they would still support doing away with pre-existing condition denials but 31 percent said they would oppose it.

Costs for those with coverage could go up because people in poor health who'd been

shut out of the insurance pool would now be included, and they would get medical care they could not access before.

"I'm thinking we'd probably pay more because we would probably be paying for those that are not paying. So they got to get the money from somewhere. Basically I see our taxes going up," said Antoinette Gates, 57, of Atlanta.

The health care debate is full of such trade-offs. For example, limiting the premiums that insurance companies can charge 50-year-olds means that 20-year-olds have to pay more for coverage.

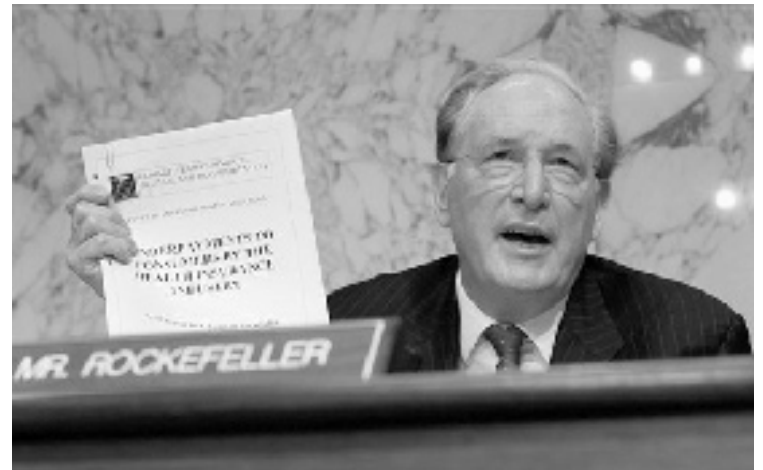
"These trade-offs really matter," says Robert Blendon, a professor at the Harvard School of Public Health who follows opinion trends. "The legislation contains a number of features that polls have shown to be popular, but support for the overall legislation is less than might be expected because people are worried there are details about these bills that could raise their families' costs." If the added costs — spread over tens of millions of people — turn out to be small, it probably won't

make much difference, Blendon said. But if they're significant, Obama could be on shaky ground in the final stretch of his drive to deliver access to health insurance to most Americans.

More than 4 in 5 Americans now have health insurance, and their perceptions about costs will be critical as Obama tries to close the deal. Democrats in the House came together to pass a bill, but in the Senate, Democratic liberals and moderates disagree on core questions. The poll suggests the public is becoming more attuned to the fact that when it comes to health care, details often make all the difference.

For example, asked if everyone should be required to have at least some health insurance, 67 percent agreed and 27 percent said no. The responses flipped when people were asked about requiring everybody to carry insurance or face a federal penalty: 64 percent said they would be opposed, while 28 percent favored that.

Both the House and Senate bills would require all Americans to get health insurance, either through an employer, a government program or by buying their



In this Sept. 29, 2009, file photo Senate Finance Committee member Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., holds up a report about underpayment to consumers during the markup of health care legislation on Capitol Hill in Washington. Despite promises by President Barack Obama, more than 70 million Americans lucky enough to have health coverage through their jobs could be open to higher costs or denials of coverage under a leading health overhaul proposal making its way through Congress. "I want to make very clear that we cannot promise the American people that the insurance reforms they have been hearing so much about will benefit everyone", Rockefeller said, "when the reality is that this bill leaves out 46 percent of the American people and 42 percent of West Virginians."

Associated Press

own coverage. Subsidies would be provided for low-income people, as well as many middle-class households.

And there would also be a stick — a penalty collected through the income tax system to enforce the coverage mandate.

"I think it's crazy. I think it infringes on our rights as a citizen, forcing us to do these things," said Eli Fuchs, 26, of Marietta, Georgia.

The poll was based on land

line and cell phone interviews with 1,502 adults from Oct. 29 to Nov. 8. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. The interviews were conducted by GfK Roper Public Affairs and Media.

Stanford University's participation was made possible by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a nonpartisan organization that conducts research on the health care system. □

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Pro-Cuba embargo money flows to U.S. lawmakers



Softball players from Cuba and the Eastern Massachusetts Senior Softball Association joke before the start of the Old Time Senior Softball Tournament at Juan Ealo stadium in Havana, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009.

LAURA WIDES-MUNOZ,
AP Hispanic Affairs Writer
MIAMI(AP)—Supporters of tough U.S. sanctions against the Cuban government have given more than \$10 million to congressional campaigns over the last seven years, according to a study released late Sunday night by a group supporting campaign finance reform. The Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit Public Campaign

said the study shows how large sums of money from a small group can influence lawmakers. Public Campaign cites a number of times in which lawmakers changed their position on Cuba-related issues within months of receiving funds from a political action committee that supports the U.S. embargo of the communist island.

Meanwhile, recent surveys

suggest more Cubans are split on travel restrictions and other sanctions than in the past.

Those who back U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC (Political Action Committee) say they are being unfairly targeted for their passionate views toward their homeland. They note many other groups channel money to politicians who support their views.

“Perhaps it’s the age-old story of money and politics, but 18 members switched their votes on the subject, some in very close proximity to when they got donations,” said Public Campaign’s David Donnelly.

“When an issue is not in the front view like health care, our campaign finance system sets up a situation in which the members are more interested in the money than deciding a rational, reasoned approach to politics, regardless of what the outcome,” he added.

Mauricio Claver-Carone, the Washington-based director to the PAC, says the group is simply exercising its constitutional right to political participation.

“For some of these folks, it’s OK for unions to support pro-labor members. It’s OK for trial lawyers to help

elect pro-litigators. It’s OK for the Jewish community to help elect pro-Israel,” Claver-Carone said, adding, “But somehow it’s not OK for the Cuban community to help elect members and candidates that help and support conditioning business and tourism with the Castro regime with human rights and democratic reforms.”

Like many other interest groups, those who support the U.S. embargo of Cuba have long donated heavily to whichever party is in power and spread the funds among legislators across the country.

The report acknowledges the donations are relatively small compared to those given to influence health care or banking regulations. And those who received the biggest donations are members of the Cuban exile community or represent it.

U.S. Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, a Florida Republican and staunchly pro-embargo Cuban-American, called the report a “low blow” and a “lot of baloney” from those who oppose the sanctions. But at least 18 lawmakers with few Cuban constituents appeared to change their votes around the time they began receiving donations.

Among them, Democratic Rep. Mike McIntyre, consistently voted to ease relations with Cuba until 2004. Since then, he’s received \$14,500 from the PAC and its network, according to the report. Democratic Rep. Dennis Cardoza, who switched his votes the same year, has taken nearly \$10,000 from the PAC and its supporters since then. Republican Rep. John Shimkus switched his votes in 2005 and has since received \$3,000 from the PAC.

McIntyre said he changed his mind after hearing Diaz-Balart’s personal story.

“It had nothing to do with

the money,” he said. “I had a philosophical change of heart. We can’t be supporting democracy and human rights overseas if we’re not supporting it 90 miles from our shore.”

Shimkus spokesman Steve Tomaszewski said his boss also had a change of heart, adding he would vote differently today on trade with China. A spokesman for Cardoza would not immediately provide a comment Thursday.

A list of the PAC’s contributors reads like a “Who’s Who” of Cuban-American business and other leaders. Diaz-Balart said the number of individual contributions and those to PACs demonstrate the community’s continued unity.

But Democratic Rep. Bill Delahunt, who has long opposed the embargo, believes there is an increasing disconnect between those who support the PAC and the majority of the Cuban-American community.

Polls show supporters of the U.S. embargo and travel ban may no longer be in the majority. Many Cuban-Americans back some sanctions against the island until political prisoners there are released, free elections are held and independent media is allowed to operate. Yet younger members and newer arrivals tend to support easing travel restrictions and encouraging educational and other exchanges.

The study was released as travel ban opponents prepare for congressional hearings Thursday on the issue.

President Barack Obama has walked a fine line on the issue. He relaxed restrictions on family travel and allowed U.S. scientists to visit the island, but he says he will not call for lifting general sanctions until the Cuban government demonstrates willingness to improve human rights and political freedoms. □



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Lawyer: Woman will enter guilty plea in Smart case

JENNIFER DOBNER

Associated Press Writer

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)

— The wrenching saga of Elizabeth Smart's abduction and improbable recovery is showing the first signs of resolution seven years after it began.

On Tuesday, Wanda Eileen Barzee — one of two people charged in the case — will plead guilty to charges of kidnapping and unlawful transportation of a minor in U.S. District Court in Salt Lake City, her attorney Scott Williams told The Associated Press. Barzee's alleged role in the abduction has garnered less attention than that of her estranged husband, Brian David Mitchell, but her expected plea to the federal charges marks a major step forward in the separate cases that stalled when both defendants were ruled incompetent for trial.

Smart's abduction at knifepoint from the bedroom of her Salt Lake City home in 2002 riveted the United States as hundreds of people helped search for the blond-haired, blue-eyed girl who loved to play the harp.

Her recovery in March 2003, when she was spotted walking suburban streets with Barzee and Mitchell, was an improbable defiance of the odds.

As part of the competency hearing, Smart said last month that Barzee had washed her feet and dressed her in robes for the wedding ceremony in a mountain camp shortly after the abduction.

Smart said she was raped daily by Mitchell throughout her nine months of captivity. She said he threatened to harm her if she ever tried to escape.

First charged in state court with multiple felonies, Mitchell and Barzee were both indicted by a federal grand jury in March 2008.

Williams would not comment on why the 63-year-old Barzee was entering the plea. She could face a life sentence for the kidnapping charge and

up to 15 years on the second charge.

Ed Smart, Elizabeth's father, said he was asked by prosecutors not to comment on any possible plea.

"What I will say is that we stand behind Brett Tolman, the U.S. attorney, and we are pleased we're moving forward," Smart said.

Melodie Rydalch, a spokeswoman for the U.S. attorney's office, said she could not comment beyond what was contained in the court papers filed Monday.

A decorum order for an expected arraignment issued by U.S. District Judge Dale Kimball said Barzee "will be arraigned and is anticipated to enter into a guilty plea pursuant to an agreement with the United States."

State court cases charging Mitchell and Barzee with felony charges of aggravated kidnapping and sexual assault stalled over the competency issues. Last year, Barzee was ordered to undergo forced medication treatments.

A state hospital report said last

month she was now competent to stand trial.

"No issues of competency will be raised in the federal court matter," Williams said.

Barzee's appearance in federal Tuesday will be her first. Her state case is pending.

Mitchell, 55, a one-time itinerant street preacher, is scheduled for a 10-day competency hearing in federal court beginning Nov. 30.

On Monday, Judge Kimball denied a motion by Mitchell's attorneys to postpone that hearing. The motion was filed after the lawyers learned Barzee had been interviewed by a forensic psychiatrist hired as an expert witness by federal prosecutors.

Court papers show Barzee's attorneys allowed the interview with Dr. Michael Welner.

It's unclear whether prosecutors will question Welner about the Barzee interview or call Barzee herself as a witness during Mitchell's competency hearing.

Judge Kimball also denied a defense request to bar testimony from Welner and



In this Oct. 16, 2009 file photo, Wanda Eileen Barzee, left, stands with her attorney, Scott Williams, for her competency review at the Matheson Courthouse in Salt Lake City. On Tuesday Nov. 17, 2009, Barzee, one of two people charged in the Elizabeth Smart case, will plead guilty to charges of kidnapping and unlawful transportation of a minor in U.S. District Court in Salt Lake City, her attorney Williams told The Associated Press.

Associated Press

experts who had studied religious fundamentalists and — like Mitchell — tie their beliefs and practices to some of the early teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Mitchell is accused of taking Smart as a polygamous wife in order to fulfill a religious prophecy included in a 27-page manifesto he wrote called "The Book of Immanuel David Isaiah." □



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U.S. President Barack Obama, left, speaks to Chinese President Hu Jintao at Diaoyutai state guest house in Beijing, China, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009.

Associated Press

U.S.-CHINA

Continued from Page B1

In his first visit here, Obama is strongly suggesting that China,

now a giant in economic impact as well as territory, must take a bigger role on the world stage — part of “burden

of leadership” it shares with the United States.

“I will tell you, other countries around the world will be waiting for us,” Obama said in an American-style town-hall discussion with Chinese university students in Shanghai, where he spent a day before flying to China’s capital for a state visit with President Hu.

The town hall meeting showed how difficult it is for the governments to work together. The U.S. initially requested a larger venue and a live broadcast on a major network. In the end, Chinese officials put the event on the eastern fringes of the city. Only local Shanghai TV carried it live, though it was streamed on two popular Internet portals and on the White House’s Web site, which is not censored.

Eager to achieve a successful summit, the two leaders were likely to avoid public spats on economic issues. With America’s budget deficit soaring to a yearly record of \$1.42 trillion, China is the No. 1 lender to Washington and has expressed concern that the falling price of the dollar threatens the value of its U.S. holdings.

In the U.S., American manufacturers blame China’s own low currency value for contributing to the loss of 5.6 million manufacturing jobs over the past decade. During that time, America’s trade gap

with China has soared.

Obama was greeted at Beijing’s airport by Vice President Xi Jinping, a red carpet lined by soldiers in dress uniforms and a dusting of snow on the grass. He had brief talks and a private dinner with Hu on the graceful grounds of the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse.

In brief remarks before the initial talks, Hu noted Obama’s Shanghai meeting with students, calling the session “quite lively.”

Obama smiled broadly throughout the welcoming remarks, then told Hu that “the world recognizes the importance of the U.S.-Chinese relationship” in tackling global problems.

The two were meeting again more formally on Tuesday, complete with the military pomp of a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People and a joint appearance before reporters. With sightseeing in Beijing’s Forbidden City sandwiched in between, the two leaders’ day was to end at a lavish state dinner in Obama’s honor. Obama was spending Wednesday in Beijing as well before completing his weeklong Asia travels in South Korea.

As is now becoming familiar, Obama was full of compliments for China during the town hall, lauding its scientific achievements, rich history and astounding economic rise.

As is also familiar, the president balanced the warm words with polite nudges in more sensitive territory, for instance on the need for Beijing to move toward a more consumer-driven economy and to improve human rights and freedoms for its people.

Even as he spoke, China continued its practice of cracking down on dissent ahead of major events, detaining dozens of activists and petitioners, according to friends, family members and a human rights group. International activists have urged Obama to talk tougher and more specifically in public about China’s human rights record, but Obama again didn’t do so in the town hall.


However, he was unexpectedly pointed on the question, chosen from more than 1,000 posed over the Internet to the U.S. Embassy, of the Internet-limiting “Great Firewall of China.” The students at the event were chosen by party-connected school officials.

Speaking in the nation that has the world’s largest population of Internet users and also some of the world’s tightest limits over what people can see online, Obama said there’s nothing to fear from tough criticism of political leaders and unfettered access to Internet information. Addressing China’s communist leaders, he said the U.S. model — while sometimes annoying to him when he sees criticism — “makes me a better leader.”


Obama’s response drew notice from China’s online community. One blogger said the portal Netease posted a transcript of the exchange, but it was taken down by censors after 27 minutes.

A full Chinese-language transcript of the event was later posted on the official Xinhua News Agency Web site but required four clicks to locate the relevant section.

Topmost on Obama’s ambitious agenda with Hu is the so-far elusive search for global agreement on a new climate change pact, stymied by disagreement between rich nations like the U.S. and developing nations such as China. Wealthier countries want legally binding greenhouse-gas reduction targets for themselves as well as for energy-guzzling developing nations such as China, India and Brazil. □



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U.N.: Once-secret Iran nuclear site to start in 2011

GEORGE JAHN,
Associated Press Writer

VIENNA (AP) — Iranian technicians have moved highly sophisticated technical equipment into a previously secret uranium enrichment site in preparation for starting it up in 2011, the International Atomic Energy Agency said in a new report Monday. The report offered no estimate of the new plant's capabilities but a senior international official familiar with the watchdog agency's work in Iran said that it appeared designed to produce about a ton of enriched uranium a year.

The official, as well as analysts, said that would be enough for a nuclear warhead but too little to fuel the nearly finished plant at the southern port of Bushehr and other civilian reactors Iran is planning to bring on line in the coming years.

"It won't (even) be able to produce a reactor's worth of fuel every 90 years, but it will be able to produce one bomb a year," said Ivan Oelrich, vice president of the Strategic Security Program of the Federation of American Scientist. "It does look strange."

The IAEA also noted that Iran's enrichment at the Natanz site — revealed by dissidents in 2002 and under agency monitoring — was stagnating, with output remaining at mid-2009 levels.

The report did not offer a reason. But the official suggested that nuclear experts previously working at Natanz could now be preoccupied with putting the finishing touches on the newly discovered site, called Fordo.

As early as three years ago, Iranian officials had announced that immediate plans for the Natanz site were to install about 8,000 enriching centrifuges, and Monday's report suggested that Tehran had reached that goal.

The 7-page report — the latest IAEA summary of what it knows about Iran — said that as of Nov. 2, about 8,600 centrifuges had been set up but only about 4,000 were enriching — or 600 less than in September. Still, the

official said output had been steady since June with about 100 kilograms — 220 pounds — of enriched uranium being produced a month.

The report said that Natanz had churned out close to 1,800 kilograms (4,000 kilograms) of low-enriched, or nuclear fuel-grade uranium by Nov. 2 — close to the amount considered by experts that would be needed for two nuclear weapons.

The restricted document, which was obtained by The Associated Press, also noted that "for well over a year," Iran had stonewalled IAEA efforts to investigate allegations that it actively worked on a nuclear weapons program.

Unless Tehran has a change of heart, the agency "will not be in a position to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities," said the report.

But the report's main focus was Fordo, a highly fortified underground space. Iran informed the IAEA only in September that it was building the Fordo facility, leading the U.S., British and French leaders to denounce Tehran for keeping its existence secret. IAEA inspectors visited the plant last month and the report noted "an advanced stage of construction," with support equipment for centrifuges already in place.

Iran says it fulfilled its legal obligations when it revealed the plant's construction, although IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei has said Tehran was "outside the law" and should have informed his agency when the decision to construct was made.

Nations suspicious of Tehran's nuclear program believe the Islamic Republic decided to inform the IAEA only after it became convinced that the plant's existence had been noted by foreign intelligence services — and was about to be revealed by Western leaders.

A senior Western official recently told the AP that Fordo appeared too small to house a civilian nuclear program but large enough to serve for military activities.

Monday's report — prepared for a meeting next week of the IAEA's 35-nation board — did not address the issue of size or function, beyond saying that the Fordo facility would house about 3,000 centrifuges, which the senior international official said could turn out about just over a ton of enriched uranium annually.

Fordo's existence has heightened concerns of other possible undeclared facilities that are not under IAEA purview and therefore can be used for military purposes.

Moscow on Monday dashed Iranian hopes that the Russian-built nuclear reactor at Bushehr will be switched on this year. Officials in Russia and Iran had previously announced plans to switch it on in 2009, giving Iran its first operating nuclear power plant decades after construction started.

"We expect serious results by the end of the year, but the launch itself will not happen," Russia's state-run RIA Novosti news agency quoted Russian Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko as saying. ITAR-Tass and Interfax had similar reports.

Iran's president warned the West not to pressure Tehran over its nuclear program, saying this only makes the country more determined to gain power by advancing its nuclear technology.

The comment by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad appeared to be a veiled threat that Iran would try to intensify its efforts to enrich uranium if nuclear negotiations with the international community fail.

"Cooperation with Iran in the nuclear field is in the interests of Westerners. Their opposition will make Iran more powerful and advanced," Ahmadinejad said in a statement posted late Sunday on the presidential Web site.

President Barack Obama turned up the pressure Sunday by saying Iran is running out of time to agree a U.N.-brokered plan to ship its low-enriched enriched uranium out of the country to enrich it to a higher level. The West had hoped this plan would dramatically reduce its stockpile of



This Sept. 26, 2009 satellite file image provided by GeoEye shows a facility under construction inside a mountain located about 20 miles north northeast of Qom, Iran. A senior official says, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009, the U.N nuclear agency believes Iran plans to start enriching uranium at a previously secret facility in 2011. A senior international official familiar with a new IAEA report said Monday that number could allow Iran to enrich enough material to be able to arm one nuclear warhead a year.

Associated Press

enriched uranium and thwart any attempts to build nuclear weapons.

Instead of responding to the U.N. proposal, Iran made a series of counterproposals. It said instead it wanted to buy nuclear fuel from abroad and also suggested U.N. inspectors could supervise uranium enrichment in the country.

Tehran has also said it only wants to send part of its stockpile in several shipments abroad.

The U.N. offer drafted October requires Tehran to ship around 70 percent of its stockpile of low-enriched uranium to Russia in one batch by the end of the year for further enrichment. □

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Buenos Aires grants first marriage license to gays

VANESSA HAND
ORELLANA

Associated Press Writer

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Two men were granted a marriage license in Argentina's capital on Monday, breaking ground in a country and region where laws ban gay marriage.

Jose Maria Di Bello and his partner Alex Freyre won the right to get married when a judge ruled last week that ban on gay marriage violates Argentina's constitution.

"On December 1st we will become man and man," said Di Bello, welling up in tears as a city clerk gave him the paperwork. Buenos Aires Mayor Mauricio Macri said the city will not appeal — in effect inviting other same-sex couples to pursue their rights in court as well.

"We have to live with and accept this reality: the world



Alex Freyre, right, holds hands with his partner Jose Maria Di Bello as Civil Registry Director Alejandro Lanus, second right, speaks to them as the couple applies to marry at the civil registry in Buenos Aires, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009. A judge declared unconstitutional a law that bans same sex marriage and authorized the marriage between Freyre and Di Bello for Dec. 1. The couple are both HIV positive and wear the red sashes to promote AIDS awareness.

Associated Press

is moving in this direction," Macri said Friday, adding that it is important officials "safeguard the right of each person to freely choose with whom they want to form a couple and be happy."

Freyre, 39, executive director of the Buenos Aires AIDS Foundation and Di Bello, 41, an executive with the Argentine Red Cross, sued after being denied a license in April. Their request was granted by Judge Gabriela Seijas, who said laws limiting marriage to "a man and a woman" violate constitutional rights of equality.

Argentina's Congress is considering changing dozens of articles in the civil code to enable same-sex marriage. The proposal has support among ruling party lawmakers but Cristina Fernandez has yet to take a stand. The Roman Catholic Church and other Christian groups are opposed. Currently no country in Latin America allows gay marriage, though some jurisdictions allow gay partners to form civil unions with many of the same rights.

Seijas' ruling sets no precedent beyond this case, but other gays and lesbians can cite it and hope for positive results in court if their requests for marriage licenses are denied.

"Ideally we want the bill to pass so that couples won't have to resort to this type of action," said Maria Rachid, president of the Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transsexual Federation of Argentina.

Buenos Aires in 2002 became the first city in Latin America to allow same-sex civil unions and Mexico City followed in 2007. Uruguay has legalized civil unions nationwide. Spain went further, legalizing same-sex marriage in 2005.

The men — both HIV positive — plan to marry on World AIDS Day at the same civil registry in the capital's Palermo neighborhood. They told The Associated Press that marriage — and not just a civil union — is important to them because they want a shared health insurance policy and inheritance rights, among other things married couples now enjoy. □



In this undated photo provided by French police on Monday, Nov. 9, 2009, Tony Musulin, a security driver suspected of making off with euro11 million (US\$16.5 million) is seen at an unknown location. A French prosecutor says investigators have found euro 9.5 million (US\$14.25 million) in cash believed stolen from a Lyon branch of France's central bank, a heist that prompted a nationwide search. The suspect remains at large.

Associated Press

Police: French bank heist suspect turns himself in

JEAN-PIERRE VERGES,
Associated Press Writer

PARIS (AP) — A French armored car driver suspected of stealing €11.6 million (\$17.4 million) in cash has turned himself in to authorities in Monaco following a massive manhunt, police in France and Monaco said.

Suspect Toni Musulin appeared at a police station in the Mediterranean principality of Monaco on Monday after 11 days on the run, police said. He was riding a motorcycle rented in his name, had grown a beard and appeared exhausted, a Monaco police official said, adding that Musulin's fingerprints matched with those on file with Interpol.

Police in both France and Monaco spoke on condition of anonymity because of office policy.

Musulin, 40, quickly became an antihero in France, a symbol of one man taking on the banking establishment in times of economic crisis. T-shirts for sale on the Internet bore his

photo with the caption: "Best Driver 2009."

The driver had picked up the money Nov. 5 at the Banque de France branch in Lyon with two other security workers. They then stopped at another bank — and while the two other security workers were inside, Musulin is suspected of fleeing with the cash.

The vehicle was recovered several hours later, but the driver was nowhere to be found. Days later investigators said they found €9.1 million of the loot hidden in a van in a garage. A Monaco police official said Musulin did not speak about the cash still missing.

The suspect had worked for Loomis France, the No. 1 French company specialized in transporting money and valuables, for 10 years, according to a company statement. Musulin never had any trouble at Loomis before the theft, the company said. As no violence was involved in the theft, Musulin risks only three years in prison if charged. Police said he was to be transferred to police in Lyon. □



12 Afghans killed in attack on meeting with French

ALFRED de MONTESQUIOU
Associated Press Writer
TAGAB VALLEY,
Afghanistan (AP) —
Rockets that slammed
into a market northeast of
Kabul killed 12 civilians
but missed their presumed
target: a meeting between
France's top general in
Afghanistan and dozens
of tribal elders and senior
local officials.
The attack Monday also
wounded 38 people, 20 of
them critically.
The market was crowded
with shoppers because
Monday is bazaar day in
Tagab, a sprawling town
of mud brick fortress-like
compounds and small fields
along a river surrounded
by the barren slopes and
snowcapped peaks of the

Hindu Kush mountain
range.
Brig. Gen. Marcel Druart
told The Associated Press
that the meeting, known as
a shura, continued despite
the attack to show that
the Taliban cannot disrupt
NATO's plans in a tense
valley where both sides are
competing for influence.
"The shura didn't stop,
and it was in my opinion
very important," Druart,
who was unhurt, said at
the NATO base in Nijrab, 5
miles (8 kilometers) north
of Tagab.
The general was sitting
down with about 40 Afghan
officials to discuss a major
French offensive launched
the previous day. The
purpose of the operation
is to secure the area for a



In this photo released by the French Army, Nato French soldiers evacuate wounded from Tagab, Afghanistan, Monday Nov. 16, 2009. Insurgents fired two rockets Monday into a crowded market northeast of Kabul where the head of French forces in Afghanistan held a meeting with tribal elders. The attack killed at least twelve and wounded 20 other people, the French military said.

Associated Press

Peru president rebukes Chile over alleged spying

CARLA SALAZAR
Associated Press Writer
LIMA, Peru (AP) —
Peruvian President Alan
Garcia accused Chile
of assaulting Peru's
sovereignty, throwing his
weight behind allegations
that Chile paid a Peruvian
military officer to spy.
"These repulsive acts do not
correspond to a democratic
country and leave Chile in
poor standing in the eyes
of the world," Garcia told
reporters at the presidential
palace Monday.
Chilean Foreign Minister
Mariano Fernandez denied
the accusation, saying his
government conducted a
meticulous review and ruled
out involvement of any
Chilean state institution.
Peruvian media reported
late Thursday that air force
officer Victor Ariza, 45,
was arrested last month for
allegedly spying for Chile.
On Friday, a judge ratified

charges against Ariza
and another, unidentified
member of the air force
for allegedly revealing
national secrets, espionage
and money laundering. The
judge also issued an arrest
warrant for two members
of the Chilean military
allegedly involved in the
affair, according to a Lima
court statement.

After meeting with national
security officials Monday,
Garcia said he could confirm
that Peru is a "victim of an
act of espionage."

He demanded a full
investigation from Chilean
President Michelle Bachelet,
saying he wants to believe
she was not involved.

Fernandez, in turn, called
for calm and asked that
Peruvian authorities
investigate the affair, which
he said occurred "between
officials of the Peruvian
armed forces." Garcia's
aides have said he canceled



Peru's President Alan Garcia speaks after a national security council meeting to discuss the arrest of an air force officer accused of spying for Chile at the presidential palace in Lima, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009.

Associated Press
a meeting with Bachelet
at an Asia-Pacific summit
in Singapore this weekend
before returning early to
Lima on Sunday to deal
with outrage over the case.
Chilean media, however,
say the meeting took place
in private. Peru still holds a
grudge against its wealthier
neighbor for taking a chunk
of its southern territory
in the 1879-84 War of the
Pacific. Relations have
been tense since Peru took
a maritime border dispute
to the International Court of
Justice in the Netherlands
last year. □

planned road that would
bypass the capital, Kabul,
while moving in supplies
from neighboring Pakistan.
The rockets struck about 90
minutes after the meeting
convened in a building
next to the main market of
Tagab. They landed about
200 yards (meters) away,
Druart said.

French forces immediately
retaliated with artillery,
shelling the rockets'
launching site, said Druart,
commander of the French
Lafayette Task Force in
Afghanistan.

Sporadic shelling could
be heard throughout
the afternoon, as attack
helicopters hovered
overhead. Other helicopters
ferried away the wounded.
"The target was clearly the
shura," said Lt. Col. Lionel,
one of the officers who
witnessed the attack.

Lionel, who gave the death
toll, said these types of
tribal council meetings are
vulnerable because so many
people are invited.

French army field rules
allow Lionel and other
officers to be identified only
by their first names.

Maj. Philippe, an army
doctor who was flown to
Tagab to treat the wounded,

said 20 of the injured were
evacuated to Kabul and
Bagram.

"Most of the casualties were
from multiple shrapnel
wounds," Philippe said.
Druart said the attack
"shows clearly that the
insurgents don't care about
the lives of the civilian
Afghan population."

"My priority is the
population, before the
insurgents," Druart said.
"But when the insurgents
prevent me from having
contacts with the population
or, like in this case, attack
the population, then I react.
I repeat my priority is the
population and improving
their life. The insurgents
are a problem we treat
separately."

The French example could
serve as a test case for the
counterinsurgency tactics
that U.S. commander Gen.
Stanley McChrystal outlined
this summer for the roughly
100,000 international forces
in Afghanistan. Currently
discussing a troop surge with
the Obama administration,
McChrystal says he needs
the manpower to spread
deeply across Afghanistan
and focus on winning the
population rather than
simply killing Taliban. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Grizzlies, Iverson part ways after only three games

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — The Allen Iverson experiment with the Memphis Grizzlies is over. Memphis announced Monday that the team has ended its one-year contract with the 10-time All-Star and former league MVP in what it called a mutual agreement. Iverson began an indefinite leave of absence on Nov. 7 to deal with a personal issue after playing only three games with the Grizzlies, all in California.

“Because of personal matters that forced him to leave the team on November 7, Allen will step away from the game at this time, allowing him to focus on those matters,” general manager Chris Wallace said in a statement. “As a result, we will be ending our contractual agreement with Allen, which will allow both parties to move forward. We wish Allen the best.”

The Grizzlies will waive Iverson but the team had not done that as of Monday night.

Iverson’s agent, Leon Rose, did not immediately return a message left by



Memphis Grizzlies’ Allen Iverson (3) lays up a shot past Golden State Warriors’ Anthony Morrow (22) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2009, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

The Associated Press on his cell phone. Iverson, who announced he was headed to Memphis on his Twitter account, hasn’t posted any updates there since Nov. 2 when he played his first game with the Grizzlies.

Memphis owner Michael Heisley told the AP last week he would be happy

to trade Iverson to another team if a better deal came along.

Few NBA teams had shown interest in the 34-year-old guard before Memphis signed him to a one-year, incentive-laden contract on Sept. 10. Memphis fans greeted the biggest star ever to play for the

Grizzlies with a big crowd for his introductory news conference and eagerly bought up his No. 3 jersey, though he wound up never playing a game on the team’s home court.

Iverson didn’t help himself much during his short stint with his fourth NBA team. He missed the preseason with a partially torn left hamstring and didn’t debut with the Grizzlies until Nov. 2 at Sacramento.

Immediately, Iverson began talking about his distaste for coming off the bench and being on a rebuilding team filled with youth from Rudy Gay and O.J. Mayo to recent draft picks Hasheem Thabeet and DeMarre Carroll.

The four-time NBA scoring champ became the 16th player in league history to score 24,000 points in his career in his second game against Golden State. He played against the Lakers in Los Angeles, where he also met with Heisley before being given permission to take an indefinite leave. But the Grizzlies got tired of waiting for Iverson to decide what to do next. □



This is a Nov. 8, 2009, file photo showing Atlanta Falcons head coach Mike Smith in the middle of a scuffle on the sidelines after quarterback Matt Ryan was forced out of bounds by the Washington Redskins, who were penalized for unnecessary roughness, during the second quarter of an NFL football game, Sunday Nov. 8, 2009.

Associated Press

Supreme Court rejects case about Redskins name

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court will not hear an appeal from a group of Native Americans who think the name of the Washington Redskins professional football team is offensive. The high court on Monday turned away an appeal from Suzan Shown Harjo. That ends the latest round in the 17-year court battle between the Redskins and a group of American Indians who want them to change their name. Harjo and her fellow plaintiffs have been working since 1992 to have the Redskins trademarks declared invalid. They initially won — the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office panel canceled the trademarks in 1999. But U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly overturned the ruling in 2003 in part because the suit was filed decades after the first Redskins trademark was issued in 1967.

The U.S. Court of Appeals then sent the case back to Kollar-Kotelly, noting that the youngest of the plaintiffs was only 1 year old in 1967 and therefore could not have taken legal action at the time. □



FILE - This is a Jan. 27, 2003, file photo showing Bobby Frankel accepting the award for Outstanding Trainer at the 32nd Annual Eclipse Awards show in Beverly Hills, Calif. Hall of Fame trainer Bobby Frankel died Monday, Nov. 16, 2009, at his home in Pacific Palisades, Calif., after a battle with cancer. He was 68.

Associated Press

Hall of Fame trainer Bobby Frankel dies at 68

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bobby Frankel, a Hall of Fame trainer, has died. He was 68.

Jockey agent Ron Anderson said Frankel died early Monday at home in Pacific Palisades, California, after a battle with cancer. Frankel had been running his stable by phone for most of the year while he was undergoing treatment.

Frankel was a five-time Eclipse Award winner as the nation’s leading trainer, the last time in 2003. He won his only Triple Crown race with Empire Maker in the 2003 Belmont Stakes.

Frankel trained six Breeders’ Cup winners, including 2004 Classic winner Ghostzapper, and ranked second to D. Wayne Lukas in career Breeders’ Cup earnings. □

Coghlan is NL Rookie of Year, Bailey wins AL award

By MIKE FITZPATRICK,
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — Chris Coghlan and Andrew Bailey both agreed to change, then quickly got their chance in the majors. Now each has a rookie reward that will last forever.

Coghlan, the pesky Marlins leadoff hitter, won the National League Rookie of the Year award in a close vote Monday and Bailey took the AL honor after an outstanding season as Oakland's closer.

"I couldn't have written it better," Coghlan said during a conference call.

A second baseman in the minors, Coghlan made a hasty shift to left field in May and found a home atop Florida's lineup. Bailey also switched successfully, going from struggling Double-A starter to All-Star reliever in a year.

"I think the move to the bullpen allowed me to get back mentally to who I was," Bailey said, explaining that he began challenging hitters again. "Just took the opportunity and ran with it." Coghlan edged Philadelphia pitcher J.A. Happ, receiving 17 first-place votes and 105 points in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. Happ, the only player picked on all 32 ballots, garnered 10 first-place votes and 94 points.

Bailey, who had 26 saves and a 1.84 ERA this season, was selected first on 13 of 28 ballots and finished with 88 points. Texas shortstop Elvis Andrus was the runner-up with 65 points, one more than Detroit pitcher Rick Porcello. Bailey, a surprise All-Star in July, was driving when he got word that he won.

"At first I thought it was a prank call. Which one of my friends is playing a prank on me?" he said. "I didn't want to take my eyes off the road." Once he realized the news was legit, Bailey passed it along to his family.

"My mom was crying and my dad was stoked," he said.

Coghlan dug himself out of an early slump and had a superb second half. He batted .321 with nine homers and 31 doubles in 128 games, scoring 84 runs and driving in 47.

Called up from the minors in May, the 24-year-old Coghlan topped NL rookies in batting average, runs, hits (162), total bases (232) and on-base percentage (.390). Though he was left off seven ballots, he became the third Florida player to win the award, joining Hanley Ramirez (2006) and Dontrelle Willis (2003).

"At the end of the year I knew that I put myself in a good position to win," Coghlan said.

With two-time All-Star Dan Uggla playing second base in Florida, Coghlan's path to the majors was impeded. He was at Triple-A New Orleans this year when the Marlins told him they wanted to try him in the outfield.

Coghlan played one minor league game in left — without getting a fly ball — and then was brought up to the majors. He finished the season with five errors.

"It wasn't the easiest transition," Coghlan said. "I just tried to work as hard as I could to get as comfortable as I could in the outfield."

"A lot of people think I'm pretty bad out there. But I think it's an adjustment," he added. "I have confidence playing the outfield. It was a situation I embraced to get me to the big leagues the quickest and to help the team win games."

After winning Monday, Coghlan thought of his father, who died when he was 15.

"That was a tough point in

my life," Coghlan said. "He was the one who instilled the work ethic in me and taught me the game. I know that he's proud, and I'm proud to win this award and he's definitely a big part of it."

Atlanta pitcher Tommy Hanson finished third in a competitive field with two first-place votes and 37 points. Pittsburgh outfielder Andrew McCutchen, who came in fourth, also was chosen first on a pair of ballots. Milwaukee infielder Casey McGehee received the other first-place vote.

Bailey went 6-3 and had 24 more saves than any other AL rookie. He also led the league's rookies in ERA.

He is the eighth A's player to win the award, tying the New York Yankees for most in the AL.

"I can't feel disappointed," Andrus said. "Andrew Bailey is a great player. He had a great season, too."

Bailey was scuffling as a starter in Double-A last year when the A's moved him to the bullpen. Turned out to be a terrific decision.

In his first big league camp, Bailey made the Oakland roster and soon got an opportunity to close partly due to injuries. He took full advantage of it, earning a trip to the All-Star game as the team's lone representative.

"I had never been a reliever in my life, so the opportunity to just go in for an inning and



This is a 2009 photo of Chris Coghlan, L, of the Florida Marlins baseball team, taken Feb. 22, 2009. Coghlan won the National League Rookie of the Year award in a close vote; and this is a 2009 photo of Andrew Bailey, R, of the Oakland Athletics baseball team taken Feb. 22, 2009. Bailey won the American League Rookie of the Year award, Monday, Nov. 16, 2009.



Associated Press

let loose was something I had never experienced before," Bailey said. "It's been a learning experience, this whole year."

The 25-year-old right-hander was a quick study, striking out 91 and walking 24 in 83 1-3 innings. He yielded only 47 hits, holding opponents to a .167 batting average.

"Certainly the first credit goes to Andrew. It's also a credit to our staff and the people who saw the change to the bullpen being a good step," general manager Billy Beane said. "He had always been a prospect, but as a starter he hit a wall. There was a suggestion to move him to the bullpen and he hasn't looked back. Since he made the switch to the 'pen he's been dominant."

Bailey became the third

Oakland player in six years to win the award, joining closer Huston Street (2005) and shortstop Bobby Crosby (2004).

After getting the news, Bailey packed a bag and rushed to the airport to catch a flight to Oakland for a news conference Tuesday. He said he heard from manager Bob Geren and got congratulatory text messages from about 10 teammates.

"It's been a crazy day," he said.

Actually, the entire fall has been hectic for Bailey. He moved to Connecticut with his fiancée, Amanda, and they've been planning their wedding for next offseason.

And now, when he stops home in New Jersey, Bailey is often recognized. □

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NFL Roundup

Colts take advantage of Pats' gamble for 35-34 victory

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Peyton Manning threw a touchdown pass with 13 seconds remaining as the unbeaten Colts rallied from a 17-point deficit to edge the New England Patriots 35-34 on Sunday.

After the Patriots were stopped short on fourth down deep in their own territory, Manning took advantage by throwing a 1-yard touchdown pass to Reggie Wayne.

New England coach Bill Belichick decided to go for it on fourth-and-2 from the Patriots 28 with 2:08 to go, which backfired. Tom Brady threw to Kevin Faulk, who made a juggling catch but was pushed backward and came up just short.

Manning needed just four plays before hooking up with Wayne for the winning score.

Bengals 18, Steelers 12

At Pittsburgh, the Cincinnati Bengals beat the Steelers at their own game in their own stadium, relying on a defense that smothered Ben Roethlisberger by holding the Super Bowl champions to four field goals in an 18-12 victory Sunday that put them in control of the AFC North.

Shayne Graham kicked four field goals in the second half even as the Bengals failed to convert opportunity after opportunity to take control. Bernard Scott's 96-yard kickoff return in the first quarter proved pivotal as Cincinnati, despite playing the second half without ace running back Cedric Benson and failing to convert on the extra point after Scott's score, followed up a 23-20 win over the Steelers on Sept. 27.

By sweeping the season series for the first time since 1998, the Bengals lead the division and, for the first time in their history, have a 5-0 division record.

Dolphins 25, Bucs 23

At Miami, Chad Henne directed a 77-yard scoring drive in the final 1:10, and Dan Carpenter kicked a 25-yard field goal with 10 seconds left for the victory.

Henne spoiled the Bucs' comeback led by Josh Freeman, who rallied his team in the fourth quarter for the second time in two NFL starts. The rookie shook off an awful first half and led his team to a pair of late touchdowns.

At St. Louis, Reggie Bush helped the unbeaten New Orleans



Indianapolis Colts wide receiver Reggie Wayne (87) makes a touchdown reception during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game against New England Patriots Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009 in Indianapolis. Colts beat the Patriots 35-34.

Associated Press

Saints overcome another bundle of mistakes and get off to the best start in team history.

Bush scored twice and Drew Brees compensated for two interceptions with two touchdown passes.

Courtney Roby opened the second half with a 97-yard kickoff return and Robert Meachem's 27-yard grab early in the fourth quarter gave New Orleans just enough breathing room to equal the club record with nine straight wins.

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Jake Delhomme went turnover-free for the third straight game, finding Steve Smith for two touchdowns.

Matt Ryan twice seemed poised to lead Atlanta on the winning drive. First, his kicker let him down. Then his sophomore troubles popped up again.

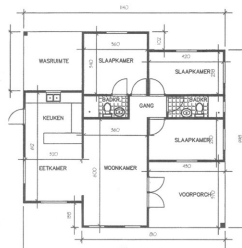
The Panthers (4-5) built a 21-10 halftime lead, but the win wasn't sealed until Richard Marshall picked off Ryan, setting up Jonathan Stewart's 45-yard touchdown run with 2:07 left.

At Minneapolis, Brett Favre passed for a season-high 344 yards and Detroit lost for the 31st time in 33 games.

The Lions (1-8) joined the Houston Oilers, from Nov. 21, 1982 through Nov. 4, 1984, as the only NFL teams to lose 31 games in a 33-game stretch, according to STATS.

In other NFL scores around the league: Tennessee 41, Buffalo 17; Washington 27, Denver 17; Miami 25, Tampa Bay 23; Jacksonville 24, N.Y. Jets 22; Cincinnati 18, Pittsburgh 12; New Orleans 28, St. Louis 23; Carolina 28, Atlanta 19; Minnesota 27, Detroit 10; Kansas City 16, Oakland 10; Green Bay 17, Dallas 7; San Diego 31, Philadelphia 23; Arizona 31, Seattle 20; and Indianapolis 35, New England 34. □

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En Perú

Presidente García convoca consejo de defensa por caso espía

LIMA (Reuters) - Perú busca una posición más firme respecto del caso de espionaje de Chile con el regreso de Asia del presidente Alan García, quien encabezaba un consejo de seguridad nacional de emergencia, dijo el lunes el Gobierno.

García se retiró de Singapur antes de la clausura del Foro de Cooperación Económica Asia Pacífico (APEC) en una señal de molestia por el caso de un agente de la Fuerza Aérea de Perú (FAP) detenido y acusado de enviar información militar reservada al vecino país de Chile.

Para el Gobierno peruano, el caso es ofensivo y ha puesto “delicada” la relación con Chile, que afirma por su parte que no práctica espionaje y pide prudencia sobre la situación.

El caso se da en momentos en que ambos países, cuya relación ha sufrido altibajos desde que se enfrentaron en una guerra a fines del siglo XIX, mantienen un litigio internacional por un diferendo en sus límites marítimos.

Una portavoz de Palacio de Gobierno de Lima informó que García convocó al Consejo de Defensa Nacional,



El presidente de Perú, Alan García, asiste a la cumbre del APEC en Singapur, 14 nov 2009. Perú busca una posición más firme respecto del caso de espionaje de Chile. REUTERS/Tim Chong

integrado por los comandantes generales del Ejército, la Marina y la Fuerza Aérea; además de los ministros de Defensa, de Economía, de Relaciones Exteriores y el primer ministro.

Se busca “tomar una posición institucional, de Estado, y la posición del país tiene que ser muy firme, condenando este tipo de hechos que

son antidemocráticos, que lesionan una cordial relación de hermandad”, dijo el primer ministro, Javier Velásquez, antes de su llegada al Palacio de Gobierno.

El mandatario peruano, cuya aprobación a su gestión se mantiene por debajo del 26 por ciento según una encuesta publicada el domingo, llegó a Lima temprano en la mañana del lunes y hasta ahora no ha prestado declaraciones a la

prensa.

Según el ministro peruano de Defensa, Rafael Rey, el suboficial de la FAP, que trabajó en la embajada peruana en Chile en el 2002, espía desde hace al menos dos años.

“Si este señor realizó este trabajo, no lo hizo solo, se recibió dinero, alguien se lo entregó”, dijo Velásquez a la radio local CPN.

EN PENAL DE MAXIMA

SEGURIDAD

Una fuente de la FAP dijo a Reuters que el caso era investigado desde hace meses y fue notificado a la fiscalía y al Gobierno para la formulación de los cargos respectivos.

El ministro peruano de Justicia, Aurelio Pastor, informó que el agente de la FAP fue trasladado a un penal de máxima seguridad en Lima, en un ambiente aislado del resto de los internos para guardar su integridad.

“El INPE (Instituto Nacional Penitenciario) lo que hace es garantizar que tenga un cuidado adecuado, además de garantizar la vida de este señor por la gravedad del delito que habría cometido”, afirmó Pastor a periodistas.

“Su seguridad está absolutamente garantizada y está sujeto a una vigilancia permanente”, refirió el funcionario. Perú presentó en el 2008 ante la Corte Internacional de La Haya una demanda en la cual busca delimitar su frontera marítima con Chile, cuyo Gobierno considera que ya fue fijada hace más de medio siglo cuando se suscribieron dos acuerdos. Pero para Lima los mismos fueron sólo pactos para regular las faenas pesqueras en la zona. □

Intoxicados 72 evangélicos en Honduras

TEGUCIGALPA (AP) - Un grupo de 72 evangélicos fue hospitalizado temporalmente por intoxicación alimenticia tras participar en un retiro religioso en la región este de Honduras, informaron las autoridades el lunes.

“Todos los pacientes presentaron los mismos síntomas: vómitos, náuseas, agotamiento y diarrea”, dijo a la AP el paramédico de la Cruz Roja, Carlos Chandías. “Todos dijeron haber comido arroz con pollo”.

Los evangélicos acudieron el viernes a un retiro espiritual a Talanga, a unos 60 kilómetros al este de Tegucigalpa, y cuando regresaban en dos autobuses, comenzaron a sentirse mal, con vómitos.

“Allí llegamos junto a los bomberos y les proporcionamos los primeros auxilios y los trasladamos en ambulancias de inmediato a dos clínicas de salud de Tegucigalpa, donde se recuperaron rápidamente... y ya están fuera de peligro”, añadió Chandías. Los afectados son feligreses de la Iglesia Shalom de la colonia Nueva Capital, al noreste de Tegucigalpa. □

Morales aventaja pero sin dos tercios para legislatura

LA PAZ (AP) - El presidente Evo Morales tiene asegurada su victoria en las elecciones del 6 de diciembre pero el oficialismo no alcanzará a controlar dos tercios de la Asamblea Legislativa como se propone, según una encuesta publicada el lunes.

El sondeo de Equipos Mori para una red de diarios dijo que Morales en los comicios obtendría el 52% de los votos frente a 18,2% de su principal adversario, el derechista Manfred Reyes Villa, mientras que el centrista Samuel Doria Medina, se sitúa en 9%. Morales tendría mayoría en la Cámara de Diputados y de Senadores pero no alcanzaría a los dos tercios de escaños que es clave para una eventual reforma de la Constitución que podría habilitar

al mandatario para una nueva reelección.

A lo largo de la campaña electoral Morales ha venido pidiendo y vaticinando que logrará dos tercios de los votos para llevar adelante sus reformas que se han visto frenadas en el Senado controlado por la oposición conservadora. Con mayoría en el Senado podrá aprobar leyes para encaminar la nueva Constitución que reconoce más derechos a los indígenas y define a Bolivia como “estado plurinacional”.

Según la encuesta, el mandatario ganaría en seis de los nueve departamentos del país, y la oposición vencería en los otros tres, lo cual es un avance respecto al referendo ratificatorio de cargos de 2008 cuando ganó en cinco regiones y perdió en cuatro. □

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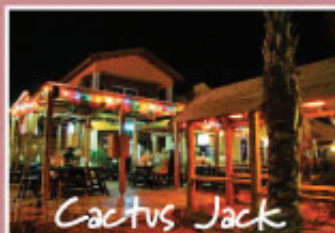


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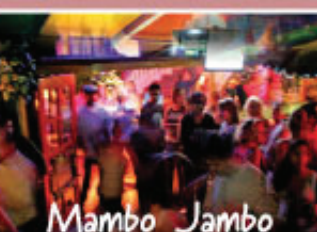
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